

# SIGHT AND SOUND

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

WINTER 1946-47

VOL. 15 NO. 60

PRICE 2s. 6d.



ARTICLES ON THE CINEMA IN France Chile Italy Greece Russia • Special Supplement Lubitsch Index



# ENTERTAINMENT *and* INTEREST

## *Films* FOR SOCIAL EVENINGS

Here is your



SCREEN

ENTERTAINMENT

SEE AND HEAR  
YOUR  
FAVOURITE  
STARS

Write for particulars of features and other films that are available for your Club Social Evenings.

WITH the object of assisting Youth and similar Organisations within the London area to organise Social Evenings, we have arranged to provide a complete programme of 16 mm. Sound Films, comprising a full length feature, cartoon, musical or interest films consisting of 10 reels, for the inclusive rate of £2 per showing.

### *conditions of hire*

- ★ The hire fee must be paid when the programme is booked.
- ★ The programme must be collected on the day of showing from our library, and returned before noon the following day.
- ★ Full responsibility must be taken for the programme of films while in the possession of the hirer.

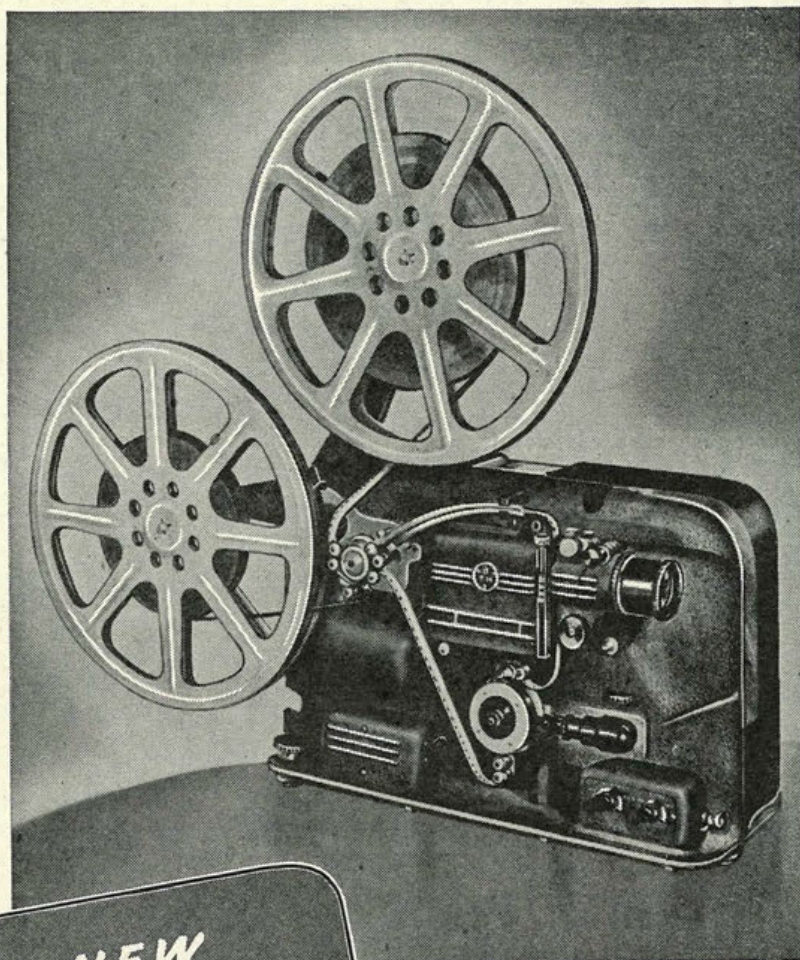
**THE MOST ATTRACTIVE  
ENTERTAINMENT YOU CAN  
OFFER YOUR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**FILMHIRE *(London)* LIMITED**

9 UPPER BERKELEY STREET. PORTMAN SQUARE. LONDON, W.1

Telephone : AMBassador 1763





#### BRILLIANT FLICKERLESS PICTURE

- 750 watt lamp
- Surface treated lenses
- Unique intermittent mechanism

#### VIVID SOUND REPRODUCTION

- Smooth ripple-free scanning
- 10 watt amplifier—Engineered for 16mm film
- 12" permanent magnet speaker

#### EASY TO OPERATE

- Quick set-up—Built-in spool arms, instantaneous height adjuster
- Simple threading—Only two sprockets
- Grouped controls—Lamp and motor interlocked

# BTH

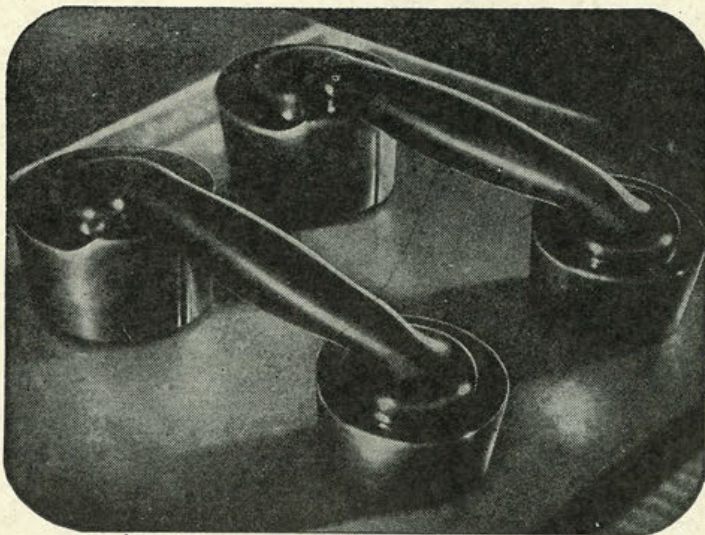
# RUGBY

THE BRITISH THOMSON-HOUSTON COMPANY LIMITED, RUGBY, ENGLAND.

A3715







## *Portrait of 2 film stars*

What are they? Just plastic telephone receivers . . . and they come from coal. What else comes from coal? Here's a fascinating subject for the motion picture screen. The mobile film camera . . . explaining, illustrating, dramatising . . . makes "serious" themes more entertaining, more acceptable to the non-technical mind. Ask your local Gas Undertaking for details of skilfully directed educational films on fuel, food, health, housing, citizenship etc., available free to approved borrowers. Or post this coupon.

**POST COUPON FOR LATEST FILM LIST**  
*The Secretary, British Gas Council, 1 Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1. Please send without obligation, details of your educational films including recent productions, and booking form.*

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

(POST IN UNSEALED 1d. STAMPED ENVELOPE)

F11

## 16 m/m FILM LABORATORIES

NEGATIVE DEVELOPING  
PRINTING AND TITLING

**J. SCOTT-RUSSELL,**  
 7 GREAT CASTLE ST., OXFORD CIRCUS,  
 LONDON, W.1 'Phone : LANgham 4382

## CINE SCREENS

EVERY KIND,  
 AMATEUR AND  
 PROFESSIONAL

**E. G. TURNER,**  
 43-47 Higham St., Walthamstow, E.17

## INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

On a wide range of subjects,  
 including:—

TRAVEL	NATURE STUDY
SPORT	PHYSICS
SCIENCE	HISTORY
FIRST AID	GEOGRAPHY
HYGIENE	INDUSTRY

Available on all substandard sizes,  
 silent and sound.

Write for catalogue, price 6d. plus 2½d. postage,  
 and full particulars to Cine Department:

**WALLACE HEATON LTD.**  
 126-127 NEW BOND ST., LONDON, W.1  
 Telephone: Mayfair 7511





# *announce further films completed*

## *From: "The Technique of Anaesthesia" Series*

Intravenous Anaesthesia Part 2.  
Signs and Stages of Anaesthesia.  
Carbon Dioxide Absorption Technique.  
Respiratory and Cardiac Arrest.  
Operative Shock.  
Handling and Care of the Patient.  
(Available to approved medical audiences only.)

●

## *From: "The Health of Dairy Cattle" Series*

Hygiene on the Farm.

●

## *From the "Soil Fertility" Series*

Factors of Soil Fertility.  
Lime.  
Land Drainage.

●

## **PENICILLIN**

The story of its discovery and development,  
and the use of Penicillin on war casualties.

---

Other films in production will be announced when completed. Applications for the loan of these films should be made to the Central Film Library, Imperial Institute, London, S.W.7

---

---



# *The acknowledged 16 mm. trade paper*

## THE **MINI-CINEMA**

**B**ACKED by over 35 years publishing experience in the film industry the "MINI-CINEMA" presents to the 16 mm. professional user a service of:—

\* **INFORMATION** on 16 mm. films and equipment, studio, laboratory, recording and mobile facilities.

\* **ARTICLES** and news on the employment of 16 mm. in the fields of—entertainment, education, welfare, industry, propaganda and advertising.

\* **A GUIDE** to current film releases.  
—a service which only costs 10/6 per annum.

*published quarterly by*

**THE CINEMA PRESS LTD.**

93/95 WARDOUR STREET, LONDON, W.1

*—for the professional 16 mm. user!*

## **DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER**

**PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY**

**DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER** stands for the use of film as a medium of propaganda and instruction in the interests of the people of Great Britain and the Empire and in the interests of common people all over the world.

**DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER** is produced under the auspices of **Film Centre, London**, in association with **American Film Center, New York**.

---

*Subscription : Six shillings per annum (post free), Single copies 1/- each from*

**DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER - 34 Soho Square, W.1 - Gerrard 4253**

*Owned and Published by Film Centre Ltd.*

*Editorial Board:* EDGAR ANSTAY - GEOFFREY BELL - ARTHUR ELTON - ALEXANDER SHAW  
DONALD TAYLOR - JOHN TAYLOR



# **KAY'S**

## **35 and 16 mm. Film Laboratories** *and* **Studios**

---

---

**DAY AND NIGHT SERVICE**

---

---

### *LABORATORIES*

**Oxford Road, Finsbury Park**

*Tel.: ARC. 3050*

*Technical Manager: ERIC VAN BAARS*

—○—

**22 Soho Square, W.1**

*Tel.: GER. 7811*

*Technical Manager: E. W. STIMSON*

—○—

**26 India Street, Glasgow, C.2**

*Tel.: Glasgow Central 9377*

### *STUDIOS*

**72a Carlton Hill, St. John's Wood, N.W.8**

*Tel.: Maida Vale 1141*

**FILM PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT  
FILM STRIP DEPARTMENT**

*Technical Manager: ROBERT KING*





*Caesar and Cleopatra*

*Eagle-Lion*

# THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

## *What does Membership offer?*

Full membership costs you £2 2s. a year. For it you will get SIGHT AND SOUND, the MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN and all our other publications free of charge

Reduced rates for hire of films from the National Film Library

Unlimited information and the use of our lending library of books

But, above all, your subscription will reinforce the Institute's policy of encouraging the development of the film as an art form and as an educational medium

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET LONDON WCI



*First time* in **16m.m.**

**HAL ROACH**  
*Streamlined*  
*Features.*  
HOLLYWOOD'S  
TOP LINE COMEDY PRODUCER

COMEDY-  
FARCE -  
MUSICAL SUBJECTS  
ALL LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

MORE ENTERTAINMENT  
IN LESS TIME

Ideal for showings where screening times must be kept within reasonable limits. Each film 5 reels in length with "U" certificate. Approximate running time—50 minutes.

Lists of 1947 releases  
now ready

"BROOKLYN ORCHID"

"FLYING with MUSIC"

"TAXI MISTER"

"ALL AMERICAN CO-ED"

"ABOUT FACE"

"McGUERINS from BROOKLYN"

"MISS POLLY"

"TANKS A MILLION"

"NIAGARA FALLS"

"HAYFOOT"

"CALABOOSE"

"DUDES and PRETTY PEOPLE"

**RON  
HARRIS**

*16m.m. Sound Film Library*  
**63-65, KING ST, MAIDEN HEAD**



# Some British Film Institute Publications

## PERIODICALS

The Monthly Film Bulletin, containing full details and impartial appraisals of all films issued during the previous month. As from January, 1947, the Bulletin also contains full details of the current activities of the British Film Institute and its branches. 1s. 6d. a copy.

Records of the Film. This new publication, published at irregular intervals, is intended eventually to cover the entire history of cinematic art and technique. Films already dealt with are "The Overlanders", "Ivan the Terrible", "Day of Wrath" and "A Matter of Life and Death" ("Stairway to Heaven"). 4d. a copy.

## RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Incidental Music in the Sound Film, by Gerald Cockshott. (1s.)

Teachers' Film Groups and their Contribution to the Educational Service, by J. F. Carr, M.B.E., B.Sc., J.P., Director of Education, Stoke-on-Trent. (1s.)

A First Course in Film Appreciation, by Ceinwen Jones and F. E. Pardoe. (2s.)

Appraising Educational Films, by Bernard Gillett and A. E. Joy. (2s.)

All full members of the British Film Institute receive all publications, with the exception of "Records of the Film", free of charge.

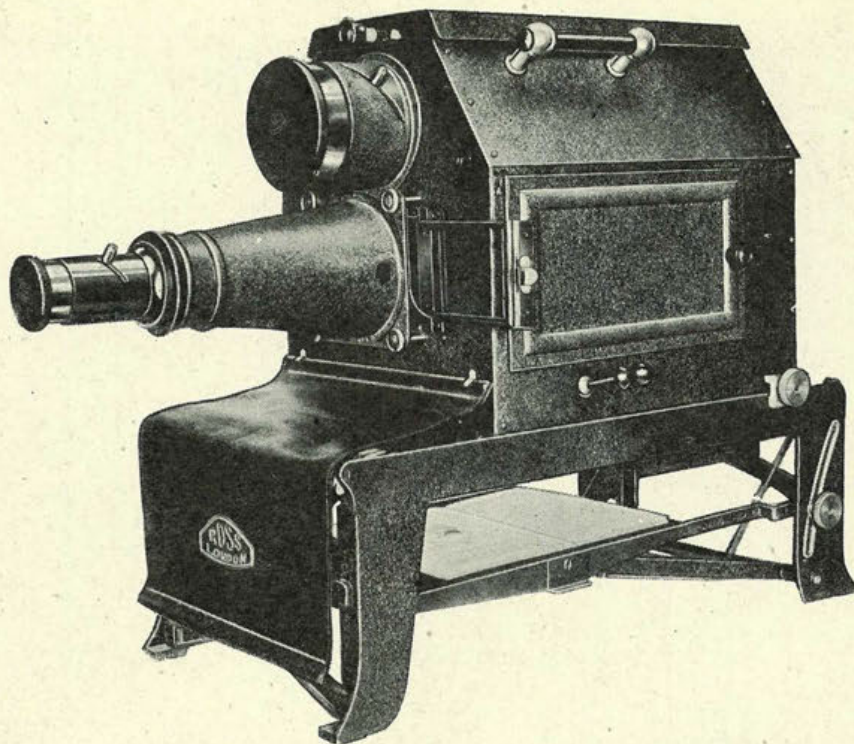
*For full particulars write to The Secretary*

**THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE**  
4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1



# THE VERSATILITY OF THE ROSS EPIDIASCOPE

It is on the count of versatility that the Ross Epidiascope makes its biggest appeal to the Lecturer and Scholastic establishment. With the one instrument and a few accessories the choice of subjects includes slides, film-strip and micro-specimens besides almost any opaque or solid object normally projected with standard Episcopes.

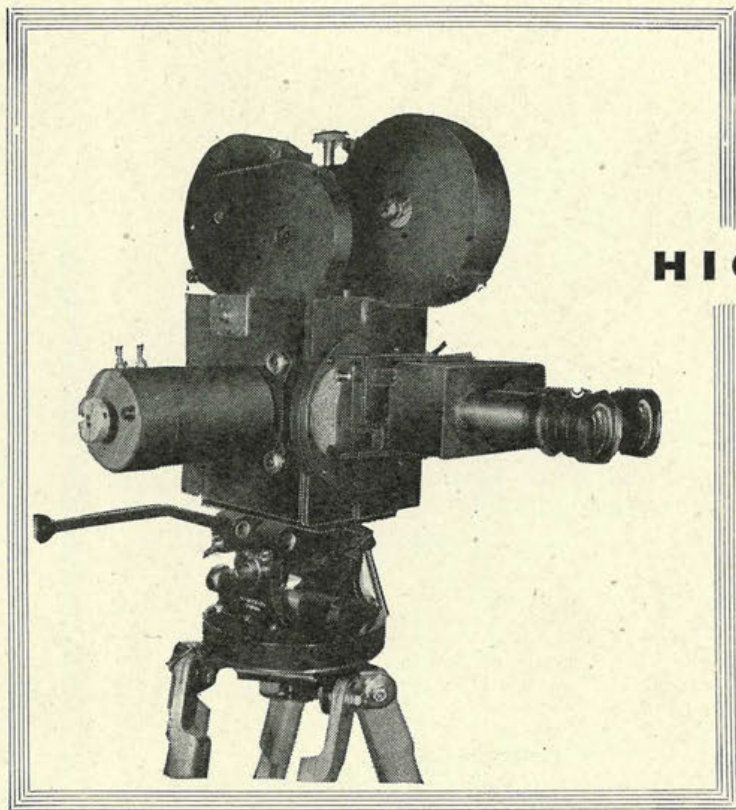


*Prices of Ross Episcopes, Epidiascopes and all accessories are given in our illustrated Catalogue, free upon request*

**ROSS LIMITED, THE OPTICAL WORKS, CLAPHAM COMMON, LONDON, S.W.4**



Clifton



## HIGH SPEED RESEARCH

The high speed cine-camera is to the industrial researcher what the microscope is to the chemist. By giving clear pictures and exposures up to 1/20,000th part of a second the Vinten H.S.300 camera enables extremely accurate observations to be made of fast moving machinery.

In this way the cine-camera provides both a valuable analysis and a permanent record of movement and time. As the leading British Manufacturers of 35 mm. cameras of all types we are always pleased to advise on their application to the special needs of the Industrial scientist. Enquiries should be addressed to—

*Vinten*

HIGH SPEED CAMERAS

**W. VINTEN LTD., North Circular Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2**

**Telephone: Gladstone 6373**

Clifton



# DANCE-KAUFMANN

"For the first time it is possible for the Science Master to control the film, instead of being completely at its mercy." [Mr. F. A. MEIER.]

## CYCLEFILMS

on

Kinetic Theory of Gases  
Composition of Harmonic Motions  
Propagation of Waves  
Reflection and Transmission of Light  
Theory of Alternating Currents  
Theory of Induction Motors, D.C. and A.C.  
Generators, Transformers, Rectifiers,  
Cyclotron, etc.

Various Aspects of Mechanical Science  
Illustrations from Nature

Also

## CRAFTFILMS and CRAFTCYCLES

(DRYAD-DANCE-KAUFMANN)

on

Weaving a Waste Paper Basket  
Weaving a Scarf on a Roller Loom  
Binding a Book

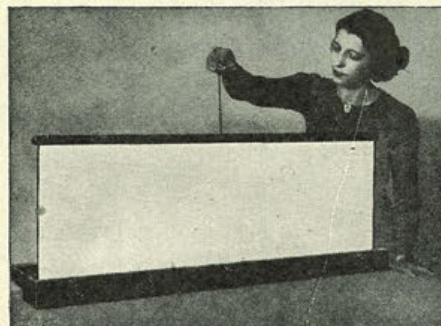
Write for full information to:

**DANCE-KAUFMANN LTD.**

18, UPPER STANHOPE STREET  
LIVERPOOL, 8

# ACTINA

SELF ERECTING SCREENS  
in Rexine covered box



Erected by simply lifting the top bar—closed by a slight pull on the cord and gentle lowering. Beautifully finished. Extremely compact.

"Witelite" Surface. Entirely non-directional—equally brilliant from any angle. Rendering of half-tones is exceptionally fine. Washable, will neither fade nor crease.

Bead Surface. Intensely brilliant. Colour-corrected. Beads will not rub off and are fine to avoid "graininess".

Witelite	40 x 30	£6 0 0	52 x 39	£7 7 6
Beaded	40 x 30	£7 15 0	52 x 39	£9 17 6

Roller Screens also supplied in Beaded, Witelite and Silver surfaces.

Send stamp for detailed list to

19, WOODSTOCK ST., LONDON, W.1

A HIRE SERVICE  
giving of the best  
in 16mm. films

**16  
MM**

Some of the  
films now available

"You Were Never Lovelier" · "Good Morning, Doctor" · "Adam Had Four Sons" · "Adventures of Martin Eden" · "Lost Horizon" · "Sahara" · "Bell-Bottom George" · "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town" · "Pennies from Heaven" · "One Night of Love" · "The Beautiful Cheat" · "It Happened One Night"

**WIGMORE FILMS LTD.**

DISTRIBUTORS OF  
16MM. SOUND FILMS

Sole distributors of COLUMBIA PICTURES CORPORATION Product in 16mm. for the UNITED KINGDOM (Dept. S.S.), 13 WIGMORE STREET, LONDON, W.1 Phone: LANGHAM 4571



PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE 4 GREAT RUSSELL STREET LONDON WC1

## CONTENTS

YOUR FREEDOM IS AT STAKE: An account of a great Danish Documentary film by Winifred Holmes	117	REFLECTIONS ON THE JOHNSTON VISIT: By Peter Burnup	143
THE CINEMA IN CHILE: By Raymond del Castillo	121	MUST WE ALWAYS HAVE DIALOGUE: By Stuart Keen	145
CZECH CARTOONS: By J. Hofman, Director of Cartoon Films, Prague	125	BRITISH FILMS OVERSEAS: By H. H. Wollenberg	146
THE FILM IN ITALY: By William Cooper Makins	126	FIVE FRENCH FILMS: By Peter Streuli	149
THE FILM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA: By Roger Manvell	130	AUDIENCE RESEARCH: By Rachael Low	150
GREEK FILMS, 1946: By Sydney Carter	133	THE "ONE ACT" FILM: By Tony Rose	152
BRITISH FILM MUSIC AND WORLD MARKETS: By John Huntley	135	CONTINENTAL AND BRITISH FILMS OF THE QUARTER: Reviewed by Roger Manvell and Arthur Vesselo	153
FILM MUSIC—SOME OBJECTIONS: By Hans Keller	136	THE NEW ZEALANDER GOES TO THE CINEMA: A book review by M. E. Cohen	156
JACQUES PRÉVERT, SCRIPT-WRITER AND POET: By Hazel Hackett	137	BALANCE AND CONTROL: By J. R. Cottrill	157
THE DREAMS THAT MONEY CAN BUY: American letter from Herman C. Weinberg	140	BOOKS IN BRIEF AND FILM SOCIETIES	158
ESCAPISM AND SOVIET CULTURE: By Catherine de la Roche	141		

COVER STILL: "*Song of the South*" RKO RADIO

## TO READERS

The utmost latitude is given to contributors to SIGHT AND SOUND and, therefore, the opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily in agreement with those of the British Film Institute. The COPYRIGHT in all articles published in SIGHT AND SOUND is reserved to the British Film Institute and reproduction without permission is therefore expressly forbidden.

---

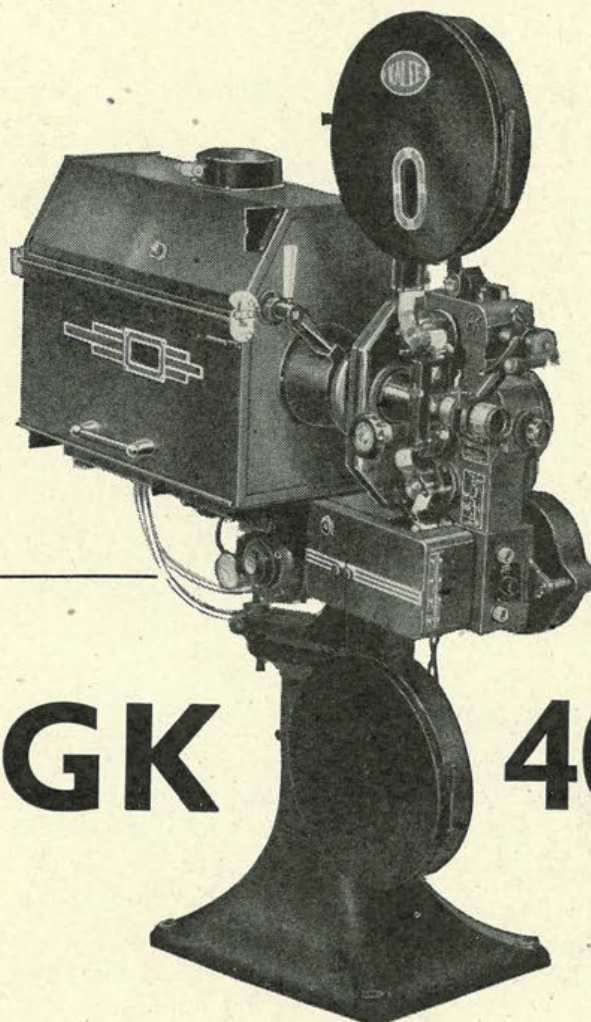
Editorial and Publishing Offices: British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1. SIGHT AND SOUND is sent free to members of the Institute (annual subscription £2 2s. od. for all publications). The annual subscription for SIGHT AND SOUND is 10s. 6d. including postage. Particulars of advertisement rates upon application to E. E. Preston, 69 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. (Telephone: Central 3952.)

---



# A COMPLETE SOUND-FILM PROJECTOR

## 35mm. EQUIPMENT



# GK 40

The GK-40 is a new and complete 35mm. sound-film equipment. It embodies the latest post-war practice in picture projector, arc lamp and soundhead, with high power amplifier and two-way loudspeaker assembly, to ensure fully professional performance with simplicity in operation. The plugged and socketed wiring means easy and rapid installation. This complete equipment is offered at a price easily within the reach of hospitals, schools, clubs and other private theatres seating up to 1,500.

*Full particulars of the GK-40 and its application to your needs will be given on request.*

Sole World  
Distributors

Non-Theatrical  
Division

G.B.—KALEE LIMITED



60-66 WARDOUR ST., W.1 (Gerrard 9531)





*Den Gcelder Din Frihed (Your Freedom is at Stake!)*

*Minerva*

The above still from the film shows the trial on the spot of a Danish informer. Two minutes after the picture was taken he was shot.

## YOUR FREEDOM IS AT STAKE !

*An account of a great Danish documentary film*

By WINIFRED HOLMES

DANISH DOCUMENTARY has come of age. Before the war it was an infant growth, struggling for existence and recognition, with only one company—Minerva Films—devoted to its production.

In 1938 the production and use of films for educational and "cultural" purposes were encouraged officially by the setting up of a Danish Film Institute, Statens Film Central, and the semi-official body known as "Dansk Kulturfilm". But the films they sponsored were fairly elementary in technique, and pure documentary, as such, had few supporters.

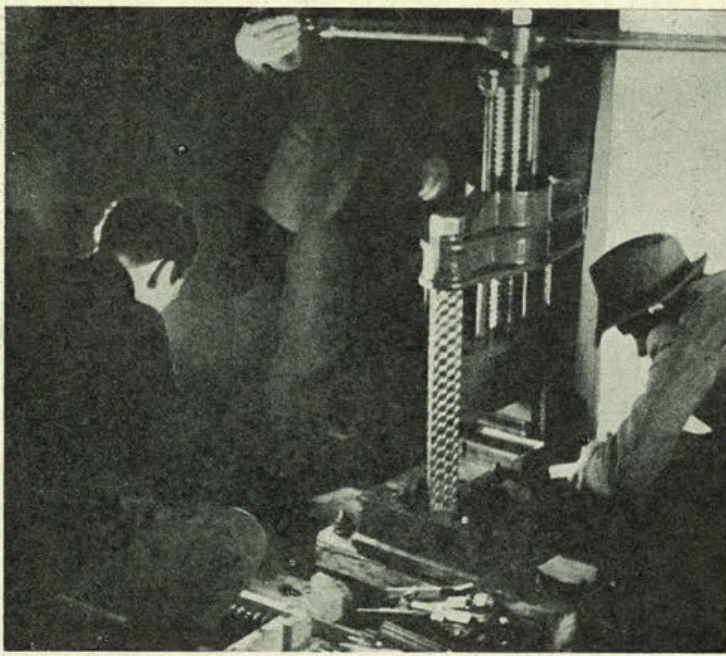
My recent visit to Denmark, however, has shown me that a remarkable change has taken place in this situation during and since the war. With the Germans occupying their country, Danes began to want films about Denmark, about her life and her work and her people. Big industry began to sponsor films about itself as if it had suddenly grown conscious and proud of the part it was playing in the nation's life and forgetful at the same time of dividends. Naturally,

documentary enthusiasts made the most of the new spirit and having been brought up on the theories and practice of the English documentary school, and knowing the useful public service made in Britain before the war by industrial sponsors of films with no direct advertising appeal, they convinced the industrialists that they should do likewise in Denmark.

The result is—Danish documentary has come of age. There are several fine directors whose films, technically and aesthetically, rank with the best documentary produced anywhere. And they find lively, eager audiences both in cinemas and non-theatrically—in clubs, societies, adult education institutes and schools. The cinemas can only show short documentaries, one to one and a half reels, because of their particular type of one-feature programme. But like Britain, Denmark is the land of clubs and societies, which provide a wide field for non-theatrical distribution.

One of the most impressive of these occupation-time documentaries is a film sponsored by Burmeister and





*Your Freedom is at Stake!*

Minerva

Wain's, Diesel engine works and ship-builders, the biggest single industrial undertaking in Denmark. "What will Burmeister and Wain do now?" ask the Danes when any perplexity arises. And what the great ship-building yard decides to do, other industrial workers will do too. It was in this way that the General Strike against the Germans in 1944 started. But that is a story to be told later.

The film is called *Sixty Million Horse-power* and it certainly succeeds in conveying size and productive power and great precision and skill. The workers are shot with vision and understanding; there is the same quality here as in Flaherty and Grierson's *Industrial Britain*. Its running time is an hour and it was banned by the Germans after the Mosquito raid on the works. Thodor Christensen—who with Karl Roos was the author of a book on Documentary published shortly before the war—directed it in 1943. He also made a 45 minute film called *Citizens of the Future*, which deals imaginatively and understandingly with the problems of Danish youth during the occupation and with the schools set up all over Denmark for young people between the school-leaving age of 14 to 18 to keep them from working for the Germans. It would be interesting to show this film alongside Jack Lee's picture, *Children on Trial*, and compare the way in which the two directors have handled their untrained juvenile material.

But the great achievement of Danish documentary and of Thodor Christensen and his associates is the 2½ hour long *Den gælder din Frihed—Your Freedom is at Stake*—begun soon after the occupation and finished some months after the liberation. I have no hesitation in saying that this is a great documentary and should have a place of honour in the National Film Library. As a historic document it is unique as there is practically no reconstruction in it—shots were taken *at the time*; the camera was present at every piece of sabotage and underground work; the man behind the camera was in as deadly danger as the man who actually laid the T.N.T. or set the fuse, of the woman who received and passed on secret orders, of the people who pedalled the bundles of illegal newspapers through the Wehrmacht and Gestapo-infested streets of Copenhagen to the distribution points. . .

But the subject of the film is much more than just a record of the Danish Resistance Movement. It is the story of a fatal five years in a sovereign nation's life and of the violent changes which came about in its people's attitude during that period of time. It is, too, a damning record in celluloid of the ways of the enemy, which no later denials can obliterate: records which the Gestapo would have destroyed along with the people who made them if they had come into its hands. Shots of a railway station swarming with German soldiers all carrying huge packages of food and consumer goods plundered from Denmark . . . of the machine-gunning of ordinary people indiscriminately in the streets . . .

The first reels are largely compilation—news-reel shots of the rise of the Nazis; Hitler talking, bragging, threatening—the great octopus which grew and grew alongside a peaceful civilised small nation. The Danish Government speaks and acts very like our own National Government did at the time, playing safe, appeasing, bowing politely, listening to soft words which hid ruthless intentions, hiding its own anxiety and fear. This compilation job is as well done, as urgent, as Capra's *Why We Fight* series—and that is saying a good deal.

The Danish Government bows and soothes; the Danish people dread and hope. Events march on. Germany attacks Poland. Britain declares war. There is a lull. The Danes go on with their lives. Then on the morning of April 9th, 1940, the world hears rumours that Denmark is occupied.

The German fleet sails through the Skagerrack; a fleet of merchant ships sails north with strange cargoes battened below decks; the marching feet Denmark has heard vibrating on her frontiers for so long advance and cross these frontiers; a stream of smart picked troops—jack-boots and steel helmets—cross the big viaduct into Scelland . . . In the half light of the spring dawn German soldiers creep into Copenhagen from the merchant ships in the harbour like thieves in the night. As they surround the King's Palace the guard—a dozen or so—open fire and die: a brief martyrdom, but no less glorious than if a thousand Danish soldiers had done their simple but heroic duty. City and factory workers go to work unsuspecting and are stopped by the raised arm or barked orders of armed soldiers in foreign uniform . . . steel helmet, jack-boot . . . the entire life of a city, of a sovereign nation with an old and glorious history of freedom, suspended by steel helmet and jack-boot and a pool of blood on the cobble stones of the courtyard of an 18th century palace.

The nation is first stunned, suspended, then lulled, not all but many, by the still soothing words of Foreign Minister Scavenius. "The Germans are here; they are our guests; they must be helped and treated well as they introduce a new order in Europe". The Danish Nazis, the scum all nations throw up of bullies and sadists, come into their own and are soon to invent more devilish tortures than the Gestapo itself for their countrymen, and to put them into practice.

The nation takes up its daily life again. But here and there small knots of resistance spring up—university professors, lawyers, business men, parsons, journalists, secretaries, wives. The trickle grows into a stream; it organises itself, sets up the Danish Freedom Council, takes



orders from the B.B.C., receives and hides parachutists and parachuted arms and ammunition, makes Sten guns underground and prints and distributes illegal newspapers, begins sabotage on a big scale . . .

And here the film becomes great. It becomes the record in film of a people's movement from one state of mind to another . . . the movement of a people and not just the courage and skill of a few patriots. You see the temper of the Danish people changing in the streets; you see the Germans ignored and growing jumpy, growing brutal. You see the careful preparations for sabotage of everything useful to the enemy, and you see the actual sabotage, the act itself, because the camera is with the men who do the work, is a member of the resistance itself.

These backs of heads, these hands and arms which pick up the guns or fix the deadly explosive into place, have a curiously quiet deliberateness about them. There is nothing furtive, and yet everything they do is secret and they go in fear of torture and death. There is, in fact, nothing of the burglar about them: what they do they are proud of, and certain that it is their duty. Anyone trying to reconstruct underground work of this sort would almost certainly create a furtive and hasty atmosphere which from the authentic evidence of this film would be completely false.

One of the greatest difficulties the cameramen—there were ten in all—were up against was the vital importance of shooting resistance people in such a way that they could not possibly be recognised if a single frame of film were to fall into the Gestapo's hands. And this not only for humanitarian reasons but for the sake of their work. The only people whose faces you see properly in the whole film are the Germans, one or two Danish Ministers and politicians and a Danish informer. After the liberation the ordinary people of Denmark come out and show their faces again and you feel, seeing the film, that some heavy dark curtain were lifted and daylight had come again to the city.

The Danish informer who is caught by the Resistance and interrogated and tried a few feet away from the camera was one of the most dangerous traitors of all, I was told. You, sitting uncomfortably in your comfortable seat, are trying him too, watching his expressions, his white face and fixed black eyes. A few moments later he is shot.

The people change still more. As sabotage is followed by clumsy counter-sabotage on the part of the Germans—sabotage of favourite amusement places, a cinema, the Tivoli, of apartment houses and big stores, just to make the Danes think it is the work of the Resistance and so turn and rend their own patriotic movement—the people read the truth in the underground papers and mock at their enemies and more and more take up Resistance work. The Germans grow angry and afraid. They try more counter-measures; taking hostages, shooting people indiscriminately, torturing and deporting to concentration camps. But the Danes only harden and each man and woman resists in his own way, ignores the Germans, avoids the Germans, goes slow at work, goes underground . . . And the Germans and their agents grow angry and savage. The most horrifying sequence of all in this film of desperate struggle and darkness and terror and violence is that in which a Dane, ordinary-looking in hat and overcoat, is set upon by a uniformed Danish Nazi for no apparent reason, and wantonly and savagely pounded to death with a brutality and hatred which, looked at now from the different climate of peace, is unbelievably ghastly.



*Your Freedom is at Stake!*

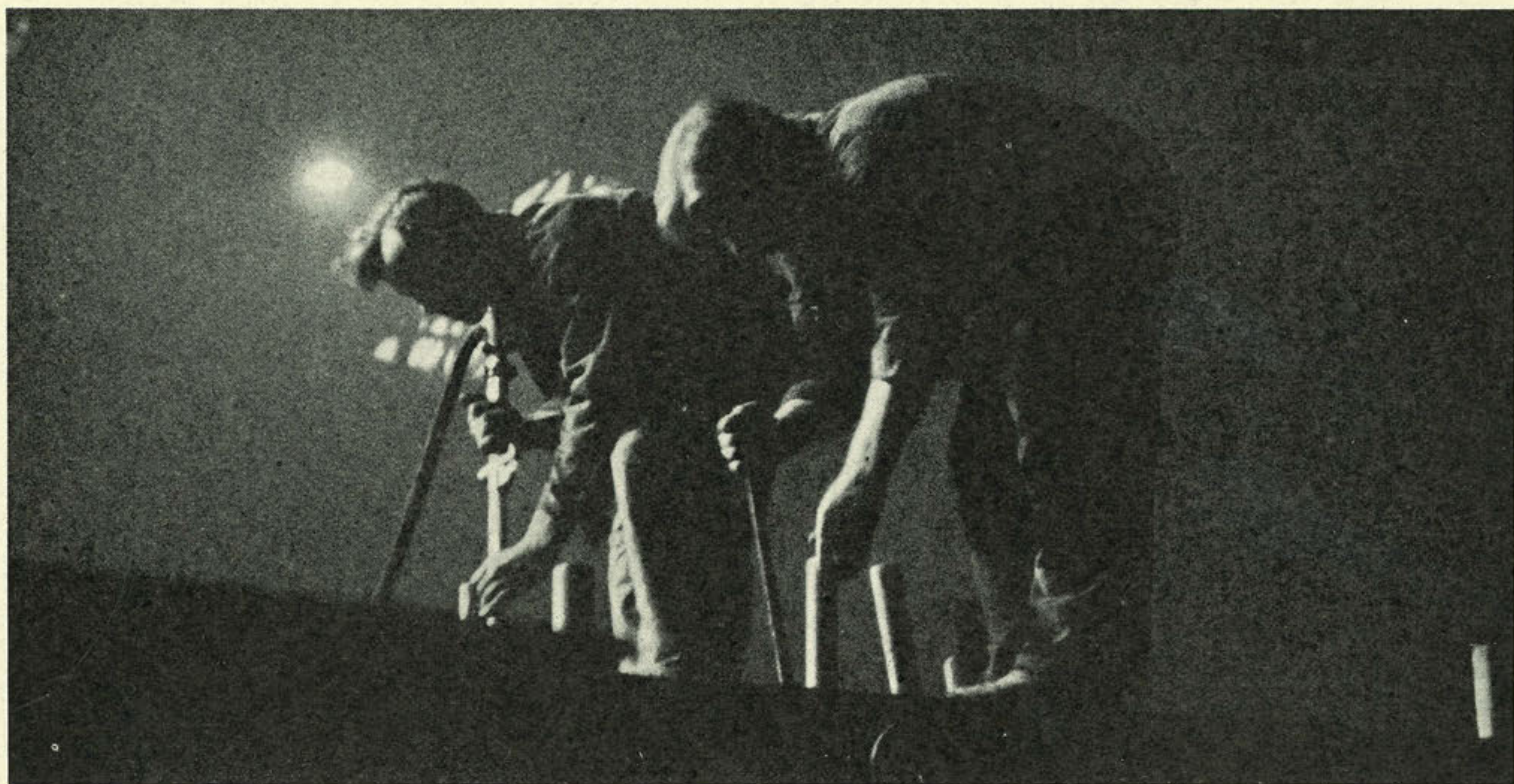
*Minerva*

In 1943 the edict for the mass deportation of the Jews in Denmark was issued. But few are actually rounded up and sent to the concentration camps. You see thousands being hidden and shipped across to Sweden and safety. This is an operation on a grand scale, needing the highest organisation and secrecy. There are some unforgettable scenes in the warehouses of Elsinore where the Jews are hidden . . . a youth's face with the eyes of a hare . . . an old woman bowed and waiting . . .

A year later, the mood of the people finally turns to mass resistance. The movement from confusion to hard definite opposition is now complete. The Germans impose a stricter curfew than ever; no-one must be outside their houses after 6 p.m. on pain of death. The workers in Burmeister and Wain's meet and object. They will never see daylight, they say. But the Germans will not relent. The men just go home early one afternoon and the big ship-building yard and engine shop closes down. The men are on strike. The other industrial workers in the capital follow suit. So do the people operating the public services . . . trams, postal services, gas and electricity . . . The movement becomes a General Strike, starting on June 30th, 1944. The Germans tried to break the strike; they threatened to starve the city, but no-one moved. The city was silent—no work, no movement, no life in the streets. It is now known that the Germans considered doing to Copenhagen what they subsequently did to Warsaw—kill the city by starvation. But Denmark was still the country where the Wehrmacht could come for food and rest and recreation; this would be killing the goose who laid the golden egg. They relented and the Danish people won. But they had no longer a Danish Government. King Christian had left his palace in Copenhagen and Parliament was suspended. The entire Danish police force was arrested and deported to German concentration camps, and the people lived under a foreign military government.

Then the Germans tried mass terror to break the resistance movement and intimidate the people. One sequence





### *Sixty Million Horse Power*

is unforgettable. The Town Hall Square in Copenhagen is crowded with people on the fourth anniversary of the German occupation. There are no speeches, no excitement, just some ordinary citizens walking about in their own city. Into the Square drives a long car. It cruises round for a moment and then opens fire: an unprovoked attack. The people run, some fall. The car tours the square, machine-gunning at will. But sabotage goes on, and as the war comes into Europe itself, is intensified. The Underground are ready to play their part if the Allies land in Denmark. Even if they do not, the Germans will need fighting and disarming.

The tempo of the film increases until the rumour spreads that the Germans have capitulated. This comes through on the evening of May 4th, 1945—a day Denmark will never forget. At last the patriots can show their faces. They mop up pockets of German aggressiveness and disarm their ex-masters. The hated Gestapo chief, Bovensiepan, is now their prisoner; the camera does not spare his discomfiture. Next morning, when the official news comes through at 8 a.m., the people go mad. These liberation scenes, coming after the cumulative effect of over two hours of watching a whole people threatened, overwhelmed, frustrated, embittered, made prisoner, are extremely moving. The climax of the film is the scene of King Christian re-opening Parliament: Denmark is once more an independent sovereign nation, with her own Government chosen by the people. There are two postscripts to the film: one, the scene of the mass burial of the Danish victims of the Gestapo, with all the sorrow and ceremonial that such an occasion warranted. The other, a Wehrmacht soldier limping, ragged, back across the viaduct over which he had marched so jauntily some years before. The director of the film, Theodor Christensen, was himself captured by the Gestapo three weeks before the liberation and put through

a lengthy interrogation. He gave nothing away and the rest of the unit carried on and the material was shot. The Freedom Council released him by bribing one of his Gestapo guards and so he was able to direct operations for the vital last days before liberation.

Seeing this film was one of the most extraordinary experiences I have had since the war. I felt I had lived through the Occupation, and now knew what it felt like to be a Dane in Denmark, a Norwegian in Norway, a Belgian in Belgium . . . an experience quite different from ours in Britain. And my companion, a Danish girl who had worked for the Underground herself and who was seeing the film for the first time, was openly in tears. She said that she lived through the whole experience again during the two and a half hours the film had been on the screen.

When the film was shown publicly in the Danish cinemas it received violent opposition from some quarters, especially from the Old Guard who had been largely responsible for the appeasement policy before the war. We do not like to remember Munich ourselves, and yet we were as puzzled and bewildered as they. Now in this uneasy post-war world we all ought to be courageous enough to examine our mistakes openly and to let the rest of the world examine them too. This means putting a little of our national pride in our pocket and not minding our own self-criticism—after all this film was made by Danes—being shown to the world. Our mistakes before the war have become a cold matter of history along with our policies, mistakes or achievements of a far-off past. If we are too touchy or small-minded to do this we are all—and that means humanity, not just Denmark or Britain—in danger of heading in the same blind way toward that danger point when Our Freedom is at Stake once for all.





*El Diamante del Maharaja*

*Chile Films*

## THE CINEMA IN CHILE

by

RAYMOND DEL CASTILLO

THE PRODUCTION OF FILMS in Chile is an innovation of comparatively recent date, with the establishment of a flourishing film industry as recently as 1944. Prior to that date local production had been confined to a few trivial subjects designed to exploit the popularity of entertainers such as a musical-comedy actress, Malu Gatica, for which the use of the cinema as a medium of its own as distinct from a photographed variety show was not an important consideration.

However, late in 1942, a new company, Chile Films, was organised with the financial assistance of the Radio Corporation of Chile, public subscription, and the Corporation de Formenta, a government trade department similar to the British Board of Trade.

The company acquired 18 acres of land outside Santiago for the erection of a modern studio, and Mariano Puga Vega and Armando Castro, president and technical director

respectively, purchased equipment during a visit to the United States.

### WISDOM

The directors have shown wisdom in their planning, obviously studying the problems confronting producers in Mexico and Argentina. Particularly is this noticeable in their attitude towards the employment of American technicians. While the studios are equipped with the most modern film-making appliances obtainable in the States the company refused to import technicians from Hollywood on the grounds that, in the long run, it was more profitable to train Chileans. This policy has averted the labour troubles agitating the film communities in Buenos Aires and Mexico City at various times, when the appearance of Americans technicians, not always the best, has led to prolonged and extremely bitter disputes becoming, in the





*El Padre Pitillo*

*Chile Films*

case of Mexico, so violent as to require the intervention of the President.

An even more unusual and farsighted move is the establishment of a dramatic school attached to the studio. A number of promising unknowns are given training in the specialized type of acting required for the screen, an obvious enough requirement for any film-making country. The casting director has a body of students to draw upon for minor rôles, with the outstanding pupils receiving parts of gradually increasing importance. Already two talented young actresses have been discovered, Chela Bon and America Viel.

#### CO-OPERATION

A policy of co-operating with the leading creative talent of the Republic, and the borrowing of leading cinematic personalities from the other Latin American film centres is being followed, not because the producers believe an array of well-known names will help to bolster up battered themes flung haphazardly onto the screen but because they think the best way to produce a cultured tradition of Chilean cinema is to use the most genuinely creative talents they can obtain, obviously inspired by the French example of what can be accomplished when the cinema is in the hands of artists. French films have always been widely admired by Latin Americans, who consider France as their spiritual home. Louis Jouvet is probably the most popular of all stars, a popularity even greater since Chileans saw the consummate artistry of his performance in Paul Claudel's symbolic play of mediæval times, "L'Annonce Faite à

Marie", with which he toured South America during the war years.

For his first film Don Andres Salas Edwards, in charge of production, chose a romantic drama, *Romance de Medio Siglo*. This story, introducing the Revolution of 1891 and the Santiago-Valparaiso earthquake of 1906, depicts the frustrated romances of two generations who are finally united in the third, played against a background of the most magnificent scenery in the country. The period sequences had a wholly convincing atmosphere, punctuated by fine performances from a carefully chosen cast. Ines Moreno gave a convincing and graceful portrayal of the gradually ageing heroine, with the fine character acting of Orlando Castillo and Hernan Castro Oliveira overshadowing the good work of Senorita Moreno's co-stars Francisco Flores and Florindo Ferrario. Unfortunately the director, Mogia-Barth, showed a regrettable tendency to pose his players in palpably theatrical poses, a fault all too common in Latin American films.

#### DETAILS

Surprisingly enough for a new company still at an embryonic stage of development, Chile Films paid close attention to details so often neglected in Spanish language features, such as interior settings and costumes, while their cameraman, Ricardo Yunis, is distinctly above the average for Latin America where, despite such magnificent work as that commented upon in the Mexican *Portrait of Maria*, a large number of films are ruined by the amateurishness of the lighting and camerawork.

Another move in the effort to raise the artistic standard of their films brought in Prospero Bisguertt to write a musical score accentuating the atmospheric mood of the film, extremely well played by the Chilean Symphony Orchestra under the leading Chilean conductor, Armando Caravajal.

#### FOREIGN TALENT

The success of *Romance de Medio Siglo* was distinctly encouraging to those who had faith in Chilean films, and the studio brought over other leading directors from Argentina, hoping, thereby, to increase the competence of their own young talent through contact with the most intelligent directors from neighbouring states. Carlos Borcosque directed an Argentinian-Chilean cast in *Armaga verdad*, Jacques Remy the French director who has been working in Buenos Aires since 1940 directed *Fruita mordida*, while Carlos Schlieper made a fine job of *La casa esta vacia*, with outstanding performances from the two male stars, Ernesto Vilches and Alejandro Flores, the latter Chile's finest actor, while the former has a name familiar to theatre-goers in all Spanish-speaking countries.

The story is one of those broodingly tragic tales so popular among the Latin races, with death and immolation figuring largely. Anyone who has read the short stories of the Brazilian author, Machado de Assis, now beginning to appear in British magazines, will have an excellent idea of the interplay of passions leading to stark tragedy so common in Latin American films, of which a good example is *La casa esta vacia* with its highly dramatic "triangle" and its





slow building up of passionate emotions to a climax of hate and murder.

#### SUCCESS

Unfortunately for their latest film the producers have brought over a star whose good looks count for more than his acting ability. Carlos Cores is quite unable to cope with a wordy adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's "Suicide Club" called *La dama en el muerte*, while even Carlos Hugo Christensen, one of the most imaginative and distinctive of Argentina's younger directors, is unable to provide the suspense and pace necessary for a subject of this type.

These films have had extraordinary success at the box-office, far outgrossing the imported films. The demand for more national films has led to an increase in production to proportions where it is well-nigh impossible to obtain space in the small studios. One recently organized company, after shooting outdoor sequences, decided it would be quicker to transport the company across the Andes to film their interiors in the San Miguel Studios in Buenos Aires. Chile Films, in the meantime, have announced that Latin

*Left: El Diamante del Maharaja*

*Below: La Casa Está Vacía*

*both Chile Films*







*La Dama de la Muerte*

Chile Films

America's most important screen actress, Dolores del Rio, has been signed to appear in their next production *La quintala*, with her own special cameraman, Gabriel Figueroa, who did such fine work on her *Portrait of Maria* and *Wildflower*, coming down from Mexico City to supervise the photography.

This exchange of artists has not been one-sided. Chilean director, Jorge Delano, divides his time between Santiago and Buenos Aires while a Chile Films discovery, Mario Gaete, is to play Loris, the Russian painter to the Fedora of Mecha Ortiz, Argentina's finest screen actress, in an Argentine made version of Sardou's tragedy of "Fedora".

#### AMERICAN COMPETITION

Hollywood has tried to put its spoke into the wheel of local production with the announced intention of Sydney Williams, producer of Joe E. Brown comedies, to make twelve bi-lingual films in Santiago. This programme, however, may go the way of all such plans in the past with the exception of a minor film made in Mexico and released in Britain under the title *Song of Mexico*, and the RKO bi-lingual production of John Steinbeck's *Pearl of La Paz*

made in Mexico City under the author's supervision and not yet released.

American films still dominate, but they appear to be losing ground rapidly to Latin American films. In an effort to stop the landslide, the American distributors began to screen dubbed versions, unpleasant and irritating to local audiences. One leading magazine in Santiago refused to review the dubbed features, referring to them as "artistic atrocities". All the Americans, with the exception of Metro, have now abandoned this practice.

Another move by the American distributors is the large-scale acquisition of de-luxe cinemas, though it would be difficult for them to gain control of the exhibition side since cinemas are mainly controlled by one circuit, the Consolidated Chilean who, financed by the Bank of Chile, are expending several hundred million pesos on cinema construction throughout the country.

The future of the cinema in Chile appears to be in safe hands with artistry informed by intelligence, a factor which ought to place the Chilean studios in the ranks of those nations, all too few, deserving of serious critical attention for an imaginative cinematic tradition.



# CZECH CARTOONS

by

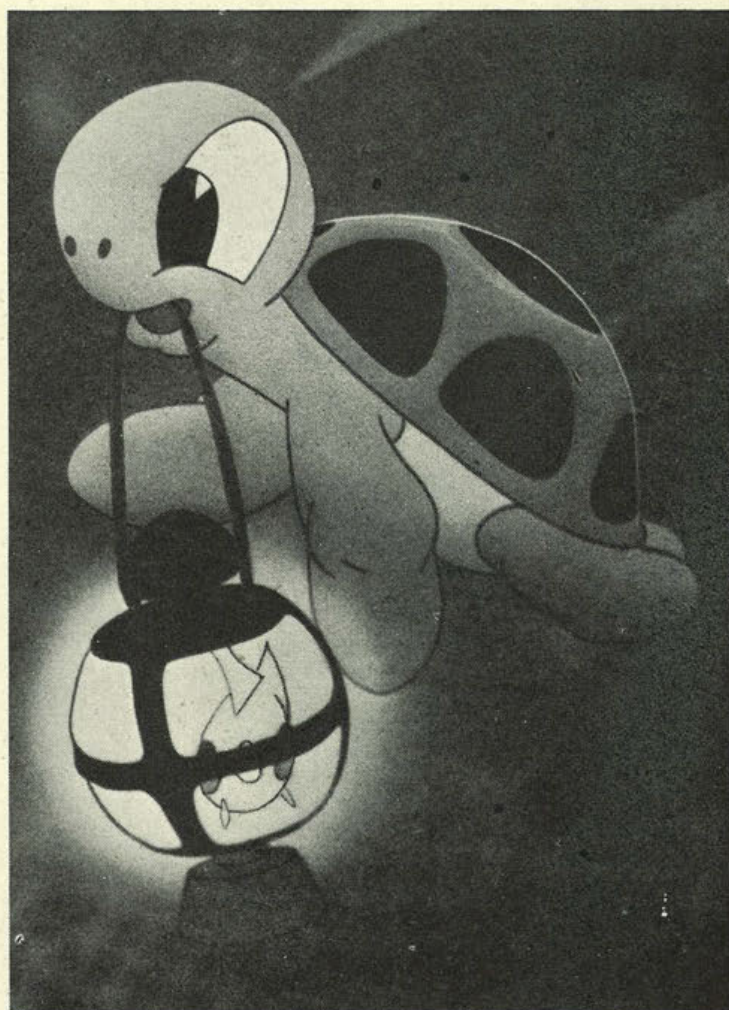
J. HOFMAN

*Director of Cartoon Films, Prague*

THE FIRST CARTOONS in Czechoslovakia were produced in 1932 by Karel Doležal under the name "Irenefilm". They were mainly advertisements, and production was suspended when Doležal emigrated to America. In 1935 the Czech cameraman V. Novotný founded the "AFIT", and with six others produced sketches, trick films, drawn captions, photo montages, etc. When the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia they took over the studios, put a German director in charge, and started on the production of an Opera cartoon, *Orpheus and Euridice*, which was never finished because after 2 years Dillings, the German director, was recalled to Berlin, and the Czech staff under Zdeněk Rajman, now director in the Barandov studios in Prague, started producing fairytales, like *The Wedding in the Coral Sea*, the *Easter Hares*, the *Weather Castle*. In 1943 Germany proclaimed the total mobilization of cultural workers, and sent the whole staff to the Junkers aircraft factory, to work there as draftsmen. The studio was taken over by a German hospital, and when after the liberation of Prague the first members of the staff returned, they found the studios smashed up, and had to start anew. All that was left were some "Debie" and "Šlechta" cameras, and an abundance of film material.

## STATE CONTROL

The start was hard; they were about 60 people, without money, but in August 1945, when the State took over the film industry, their enterprise was put on a sound financial footing. Under the directorship of V. Hofman and the painter Jiří Trnka they started with the production of typical Czech films, using old fables and Czech fairytales. The first film was *Grandfather Plants a Beet*, an old children's story. Under Jiří Trnka they produced in 1945 *The Animals and the Brigand*, a film which won the first prize for international cartoons in a competition held in Cannes in November 1946. Then came *The Gift* and *The Tryton in the Mill*, and then finally the story of *Perák the chimney sweep and the S.S.* This film pictures the fight against the Gestapo and occupation forces in Czechoslovakia, and is one of the best so far produced. In production is a film depicting the Prague tramway, a comic which is a skit on the Prague communication system. The film is called *Attention—here we go*. For the next year their program



*The Wedding in the Coral Sea*

comprises films which propagate peace and democracy, and they intend to stick to their own, typical Czech subjects.

Their cartoons are partly black and white, partly colour cartoons. For these latter they use the big laboratories of the Barandov studios in Prague. Apart from drawn cartoons they also produce puppet cartoons, although the main studio for this kind of cartoons is in Zlin, Moravia, where the big Bata works are.

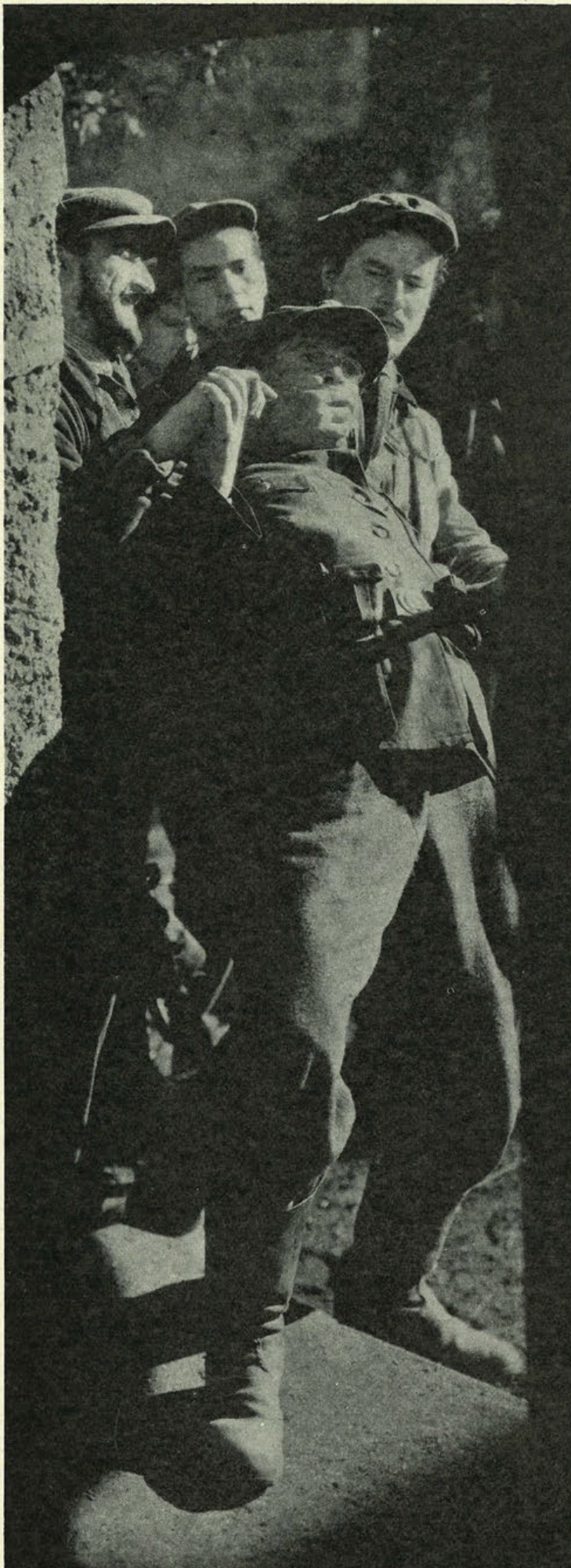
## THE LEADERS

The leading men of the Czech cartoon industry are the producer Jiří Trnka, the scenarist Eduard Hofman, and the musical part is done by Václav Trojan. Apart from these they employ some 150 people, mainly on the technical staff.

The State does not influence them at all as to the topics chosen, or the way films are made. Its part is mainly the financial side, and the distribution.

Although the Czech cartoon industry suffers still under insufficient studios and material, its standard is rather high, and its special way of tackling topics will help to get its products on the world market.





## THE FILM IN ITALY

By

WILLIAM COOPER MAKINS

IN THE TWO YEARS following the liberation of Italy the Italian Film Industry made a remarkable recovery; and what is particularly interesting is that almost at once contemporary themes began to be treated. Probably too much has been written about *Roma: Città Aperta*, but it is a remarkable film, and it appears to be very little known in this country that this film is only one of a large group of films which show the same quality of documentary attack on the questions of the day.

It should be said, too, that this group of films is representative of an influential movement in Italian film production—they do not constitute an isolated minority of the films produced, and they aim, not at the intellectual section of the audience, but at the popular mass which wants to be entertained first and educated afterwards.

Film producers, of course, have a first-class opportunity. The legitimate theatre in Italy is dead—it hasn't had much to say for itself for the last forty years, and there is no widespread repertory movement to perpetuate past successes or introduce foreign works. But worse than its imaginative bankruptcy is its economic difficulties: it is impossible, for economic reasons, to make the theatre popular. Vaudeville and revue are very much alive, but again these are expensive, and when they tour they cover only the principal towns. The cinema penetrates to the villages and costs much less than it does in this country. (Even in large cities like Padua, only one cinema had two projectors—and that house was requisitioned for Allied troops! The Italian filmgoer still smokes a cigarette and chats with his neighbours between the two parts into which the film is divided.)

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

This documentary group is, of course, only part of the whole production of Italian films. Historical pastiche, biographies, musicals, light comedies, highly sentimental romances and the like are all produced. There is also the clerical film, but the Vatican seems to be exporting its best film directors to Hollywood, where the Church's influence is more effective, if not more marked. The only clerical film I saw was *I Bambini Ci Guardano* (*The Children are Watching Us*), a propaganda film against divorce. It seemed to be very popular, but was in fact a very poor film, very slow (except for one sequence), very badly written, and, from a propaganda point of view, evading all the main issues.

By special dispensation, priests, monks, nuns and mendicants were allowed to go to see *La Mia Via* (*Going My Way*) a dubbed version of the Bing Crosby film, which had enormous success with the general public, for whom the sportive priest was a revolutionary figure. We are so used to the hearty cleric in this country that it is difficult to imagine the lively effect of his sudden appearance on an Italian screen. The Church's dispensation in this instance inspired



cartoonists and the originators of apocryphal tales to imagine a nunnery which came to town to see Bing, but went into the cinema showing *La Taverna dei Sette Peccati*, the dubbed version of La Dietrich's boisterous, if somewhat sultry piece. The nuns came out of this performance edified, but puzzled—or so the story went . . .

I have selected five films whose treatment is worth discussing; but before we go further I should warn the expert reader that I write as a member of the audience. I have no technical experience of film-making.

#### MOST MEMORABLE

One way of making a film memorable for me is to establish a place. I think I could still find my way about the village of *La Femme du Boulanger*, for example. In Italian films the place is as likely as not to be Rome. In fact, four of the five films I have selected are set in Rome. But it is not the Rome of the tourist—as it might well be if Italian producers were squinting at a foreign market. It is the Rome of the middle and working classes. Never a glimpse of the Coliseum or the public gardens! And on the other hand, there is no sign of romanticising the scene: the poor are not more ragged, nor the rich more elegant than one knows them to be.

The film which best succeeds in establishing a place, however, is the one not set in Rome. It is in my opinion the most memorable of this group. *Un Giorno nella Vita* (*A Day in Life*) is set round one of the thousands of nunneries set on the top of a hill. (I think this one is in southern Tuscany.) Its tower commands a view of the district and this fact, of course, catches the eye of the local commander of German artillery, who places an observation post in it. The post is apparently spotted by the Allied forces and dive bombers are sent to deal with it—one of the best-managed crises of the film. The story starts with an account of a skirmish between German troops and local partisans in the woods which surround the nunnery. The partisans retreat to the nunnery and are hidden by the nuns. Among the partisans there are two Allied prisoners of war: an Englishman and an Italo-American. The Englishman was wounded in the skirmish and the American, as a student of medicine, performs an operation with the help of the terrified nuns. In this very well handled sequence, not a word of Italian is spoken by the Englishman, and this is used most effectively to heighten the pathos.

#### THE PARTISANS

But the most important thing in this film from the treatment point of view is the manner of dealing with the partisan group. In defeated Italy one might expect the partisan movement to appear in heroic, romanticised colours. In the group of films I am dealing with, this is far from the case. My army work brought me into close contact with Italian partisans, so I was very pleasantly surprised to see how very honestly they dealt with this aspect of the history of Italy's recent past. For example, the group includes what I used to call the Accidental Partisan: that is, the man who got caught up in the partisan organisation without wanting to. (In the film, a Neapolitan commercial traveller gets caught up like this, and provides an element of comedy which is also documentary.) Then, too, there is



*La Fornarina* (*The Baker's Daughter*)

the criminal element: this is represented by a young thief who tries to loot the chapel while all the excitement draws everyone's attention elsewhere.

But perhaps the main stroke of honesty in the film is the fact that the effectiveness of the partisan movement is not exaggerated—we have become so accustomed to Hollywood absurdities on this subject that an honest treatment of the theme seems fantastically under-written, and this Italian film might even draw that comment from the British critic. The romantic partisan film would, of course, be acceptable as a thriller; but a Hollywood "document" like *A Bell for Adano* would simply be laughed at. I hope it has not been dubbed into Italian—I fancy it would do American prestige no good whatever. I have never seen Hollywood so determined to make all the possible mistakes; and I hope I shall never again see her quite so successful.

I draw a distinction between the partisan movement and the underground movement, because in the burrows of the underground there was no room for rabbits, whereas whole bands of partisans were composed of passive resisters who never intended to do any more than hide. Two of the five films deal with the underground movement: *Roma: Città Aperta* (*Rome: The Open City*) and *Due Lettere Anonime* (*Two Anonymous Letters*). The second of these is in some respects better than the first, but I shall make one or two observations on Italy's most successful post-war film, because I know something about the background. The most notable thing about the story is that the priest and the communist share the dramatic honours. Now, there was a tiny minority of the Italian priesthood which was anti-





### *La Vita Ricomincia*

fascist all through the twenty-three years of the regime. I have met one or two of these unhappy men, who found themselves between two fires: they were menaced on the one side by the collaborating majority who took their lead from Rome and would do little or nothing to protect them, and on the other side, by the political police of the regime, who had a completely free hand when dealing with suspected activity subversive to the regime. One of the half-dozen vintage anti-fascists I met in my two years in Italy was a priest of this kind. The Armistice of September, '43, caused an inflationary growth of the anti-fascist movement, which was reflected in a new tolerance of the activity of anti-fascist elements in the priesthood. (There is matter for more than one bitter comedy in a study of this process as it affected the Venezia Giulia area, where the Slav question complicates—and to some extent illuminates—the issues.)

The priest is still one of the most important figures in Italian life; and even the most rabid communist is inclined to speak of him more in sorrow than in anger, as though he expected more than he got from the Church. The heroic priest in *Roma: Citta Aperta* is part of an organisation which passed Allied prisoners of war and German deserters through Rome into the neutral Vatican City. The communist, on the other hand, appears to have been engaged on somewhat more active sabotage; but the cost of discovery was the same for both. They were both risking their lives. And that is nothing less than history.

I say that the companion piece, *Due Lettere Anonime*, is in some respects better, mainly because it attempts less, and so avoids the charge of being pretentious (which *Roma: Citta Aperta* is in parts) and over-sensational. (The tortures

and horrors which we know the Gestapo performed are nonetheless too horrific to be represented on the screen: I've heard people in Italy saying that *Roma: Citta Aperta* was "propaganda", and I'm sure they said that not because they did not believe that men were thrashed to death, but because they did not want to be reminded of the undisputed fact.) The two anonymous letters in the more modest story were written by a person whose identity the tale determines; it is a who-dunnit, the villain of the piece being an Italian collaborator, and not the Gestapo. The scene of this film is set in and around a small printing works in a suburb of Rome. Some of the employees are running a clandestine press, and the first anonymous letter denounces part of their organisation to the Germans. Both as a document of the Italian underground and as entertainment, I think it is better than *Roma: Citta Aperta*. It is a very competent, well-written thriller.

### DRAMA AND COMEDY

The other two films in the group are a drama and a comedy. The drama is a star vehicle for Allida Valle, whose beautiful face and figure Hollywood has bought, and the title of the film is *La Vita Ricomincia* (*Life Begins Again*). The story is important in this case, as the documentary side of the film is relatively poor. Allida is the wife of an Italian officer, who appears to have no private means and no family. Let us admit without haggling that such cases must have existed. They have a child. The father goes to the war, and for a time Allida manages to make ends meet with the meagre allowance the regime provides.



She faces a personal and financial crisis, however, when the child falls ill, and the doctors tell her that its life can only be saved by a dangerous—and very expensive—operation, for which, apparently, the specialist insists on being paid in cash. (This interesting highwayman does not appear in the film.) She raises the money by becoming the mistress of a very wealthy man, whom she drops as soon as the doctor's bill is paid. Life returns to its suburban rut until the war ends and daddy comes back. He finds his wife oppressed with unexplained guilt-feelings, which weigh so heavily upon her that she goes out one day with a small automatic and shoots her former lover. The trial, of course, reveals the whole story to the agonised husband, and the film poses the question: Should he forgive? The story is a silly novelette; but it is not quite as silly as *Piccadilly Incident*, and it does deal with the problem of the return from war with occasional touches of sardonic humour from the professor who is the story's commentator and a friend of both husband and wife. That character, and the acting of other minor roles, in fact, saves the piece from being hopelessly banal; and I include it in this group for that, and for one or two memorable "documentary" moments. For example, the scenes in the prison are handled with intelligence; the background of American Military Police herding street-women through the prison's offices, the eternal bureaucratic schedules of the officials, the tired, southern accents of the warders and so on, help to build an atmosphere which takes away so much from the artificiality of the story that one does suspend disbelief.

## IRISH MEMORIES

Finally there is the comedy, *Abbasso La Miseria* (*Down With Poverty!*). If I had to select two of these five films for exhibition in England, I should choose *Un Giorno nella Vita* and this comedy. Its star is Anna Magnani, who in my opinion is one of the finest artists on the Italian screen. (She has a part in *Roma: Città Aperta* which she plays magnificently.) Given the right material, she is capable of rising to European reputation comparable with that of the late Raimu, and this comedy is a good example of her work.

I found that in Italy I was constantly being reminded of Ireland. Some things in Italian are impossible to translate into English, unless the English is pronounced with a marked Dublin accent. (A sudden, sarcastic use of the *Lei* form of the verb, for example, translates well as *Your honour . . .*) And there were moments in *Abbasso La Miseria* when I wondered if Sean O'Casey himself had not perhaps had a hand in the writing of the film. Anna is the wife of an honest, rather ineffectual truck driver in Rome. Her dress and her house shows all the earmarks of cheese-paring. Life, in fact, is very difficult for her, and, as far as one can see, it has been so for years. For her neighbours on the other hand the story is the reverse. Their cupboards bulge with sausage, their apartment is grossly overfurnished (in atrocious taste), and the ladies of the household wear smart (too smart) frocks in great variety, and are loaded with immense, sparkling jewels. Yes, the Signora is in the Black Market, up to the neck, and poor Anna has to suffer all sorts of patronage and snobbery when she and her husband are invited to supper. (They are glad of a square,

## THE MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN

*Readers who are not members of the B.F.I. may be interested to know that, commencing with the January issue, the Institute's "Monthly Film Bulletin" contains—in addition to the usual film reviews—full details of the activities of the Institute and its branches. A few subscriptions may still be accepted from non-members at 15s. 6d. per annum*

uninhibited meal!). Anna's husband, with his truck, becomes involved in this neighbour's dealings in Naples at the moment when, on the chance of quick money, he has unwittingly contracted to carry large quantities of forged money from Naples to Rome. There is, of course, much else on the truck on the return journey, but the only thing Anna's husband has managed to pick up in the way of merchandise is a gold brick sold to him by an American soldier. He also takes pity on an orphan child, a boy who has been living on his wits in the streets of Naples since he lost his mother in an air-raid. Anna at first receives the boy with reluctance coloured with dismay. The boy, however, proves a boon. When it is discovered that the box of lighter flints sold to the truck driver by the GI Joe contains nothing but useless stone, the kid wraps it up again and sells it in the street, at considerable profit, to another GI Joe.

Anna keeps her savings in a hole in the wall above her bed, and the cache is hidden by the engraving of a saint. It is the comedy which is built round this hiding place which is strongly reminiscent of O'Casey. The saint, for example, is personally rebuked for indiscretion when Anna discovers that her adopted child has discovered her secret.

## COMMON THEME

An interesting point about all these films is that most of them deal with working-class life, and invade a middle-class milieu only incidentally, and often with some hostility. (The truck-drivers' boss in *Abbasso La Miseria* has a silly, grasping daughter; the man who wrote the two anonymous letters in the film of that title is of the managerial class; the collaborators with the Gestapo in *Roma: Città Aperta* are markedly bourgeois, and so on.) Only in the worst of the five films I have selected does an aristocratic character appear—and she is a baroness with a disreputable, high-class procuring business. Yet in none of them is politics preached: the subject of the film is dealt with for its dramatic values.

From every point of view there seems to be a strong case for surmounting the difficulties at present in the way of exhibiting some of these Italian films in this country. An honestly made film should give the audience the feeling that it is entering into the life of the people in it almost as an eavesdropper. These Italian films do succeed in doing just that, and as pure entertainment (whatever that is!) and as a contribution to international understanding, they should be seen by lovers of the cinema and of democracy.



# THE FILM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by

ROGER MANVELL

(The section of this article headed "A Nationalised Industry" is reprinted from "The Listener" by courtesy of the B.B.C.)

WE HAD TIME to think it all over in the silver air-taxi bringing us back from Prague to London. A dozen tired people let their eyes become hypnotised by the sunlit cloudscape. Seen through my window it extended over shadowed hummocks of gleaming cloud to a dead level horizon a vast distance away, beyond which the sky rose shell blue into white streamers of mist above us. Immediately beneath us was a foreground of grey-white softly-puffy clouds delicately erect in the air. They brought our plane down to the level of these cloud-waves and we skimmed through them like a speed-boat dashing steam aside at two hundred miles an hour, and tossing enough to make me feel on the edge of sickness. Bob Adams said he preferred the earth: Winnington clung on to a precious bottle of slivovic. Asquith went into the cockpit, fascinated by the on-rushing speed of the clouds. Anstey talked to Rotha. Pat Jackson argued with me about *San Demetrio* and *Western Approaches*. Margaret Marshall said she hadn't slept for three weeks and made up for time. We had all tried to live up to a dizzy spell of Czech hospitality.

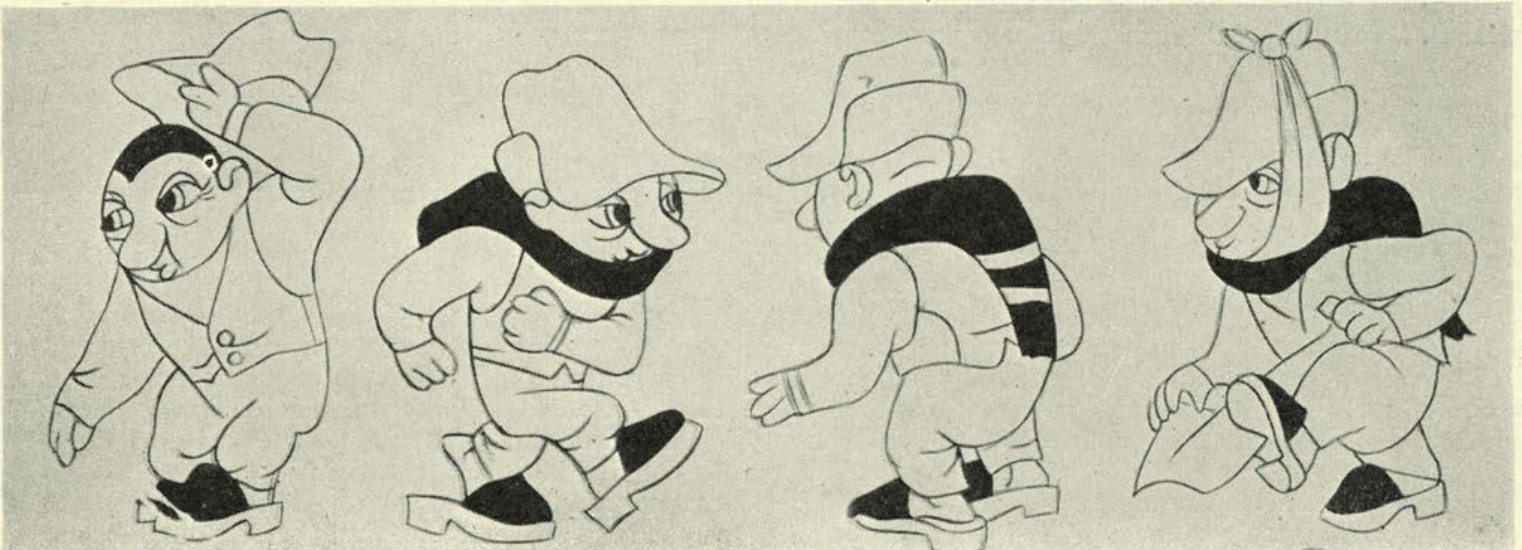
## THE BRITISH FILM FESTIVAL

The British Film Festival had lasted from September 28th to October 13th, had seen the premières of *Henry V*, *The Captive Heart*, *Brief Encounter*, *The True Glory*, *The Seventh Veil*, *Men of Two Worlds*, *Caesar and Cleopatra* and *Western Approaches*, lectures by Mary Field, Joseph Reeves, Raul Rotha, Anthony Asquith, T. Hankin (Ministry of Education), Ernest Lindgren, Edgar Anstey and myself, and a magnificent concert of British film music

played by the Czech Film Symphony Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. Yet more important for most of us (no one counted us, but there must have been about sixty or seventy representatives of British film technicians, artistes, publicists, film critics and Government officials in Prague) were the contacts we made with our colleagues in Czechoslovakia, and the innumerable meetings, formal and informal, with which the days and nights were occupied. The Festival was spread over the whole country, with centres at Prague, Brno (capital of Moravia) and Bratislava (capital of Slovakia) to which several of us went to repeat our lectures and to attend the premières of a selection of the British films showing in Prague, where two cinemas had been set aside for the Festival, one for the main premières, the other for the lectures and for programmes of British documentary films. Visits of tribute were paid to the graves of President Mazaryk and to those of Czech film technicians shot during the Occupation, and we were conducted over the great studios on the Barrandov hill outside Prague, studios greatly enlarged by the Germans for their own productions and now left in the hands of the Czechs, who consequently possess the best studios in Europe with sound stages so large they cannot yet find adequate use for them. The Russians have rented one section: the Czechs want the British to rent another, whilst they themselves will occupy the rest of the stages.

## A NATIONALISED INDUSTRY

Soon after the Liberation the Czechoslovakian film industry was nationalised. This means that everything to do



From the Czech cartoon film "Grandfather Plants a Beet"



with films, their production, their distribution, their import and export, and their exhibition have all become a state concern. What the Czechs and Slovaks said, in effect, was this: 'The Cinema is an important part of our national life. We may call most of it by the vague word "entertainment" or "recreation", but whatever the word we use to describe the reason for going to the pictures, we know that the cinema is really an important part of our cultural life, and we feel it is safer for the state to have a say in how it is run'. There are always two strongly opposed points of view over nationalisation of the cinema. One says that nationalisation means that the Government will use the cinema just for propaganda. The other says that uncontrolled competitive box-office entertainment keeps the cinema a pander to low taste, makes progress in standards accidental and keeps the mature artist in servitude to the adolescent majority of film-goers. The Czechs say that they want their cinema to show the best foreign entertainment films to their public that they can get hold of (like us, they depend mostly on imported films for their programmes, Swedish, Russian, British, French and American), and that they want also their own small production schedule to represent the best that their individual artists and technicians can turn out, whether in comedies, dramas, historical films, cartoons, puppet films, documentaries or instructional films.

#### KINDLY CRITICISM

In Czechoslovakia they have about two thousand cinemas catering for audiences of two hundred million annually. (Their population is about fourteen million.) They are making about twenty of the two hundred and fifty films they want each year: so they have to import and title in Czech a large number of foreign films. Their audiences are used to pictures in a foreign language and they are keen critics of the various national styles of film-making. British films are popular; the Czechs can use about fifty a year. At the Festival of British Films recently held in Prague, the reactions to the films we showed were most interesting. The Czechs seemed to be looking for the quality they called British 'civilism' in our pictures. They naturally found the films most dependent on dialogue (*Caesar and Cleopatra* and *Henry V*) the heaviest going: both were severely criticised, though *Henry V* inspired high praise in some papers.

The films uniformly liked were *Brief Encounter* and *Western Approaches*. *The Captive Heart* met with some criticism; Michael Redgrave was too English for a Czech; the prison-camp seemed too easy-going compared with the Czechs' own experience of the Nazis. *The Seventh Veil* was liked by some; but one paper said British films were best when they were consistently British, but in this case the Hollywood psychological thriller seemed to have been the model. *The True Glory* was admired as a record film: much of its emotional effect was lost by the absence of the wonderful sound-track made by so many different Allied voices. The film was dubbed in Czech, and the human effect was lost. *Men of Two Worlds* raised a variety of respectful criticism and the fine intentions of the film were recognised, but the acting was not always liked. The Festival was really led by *Brief Encounter* and *Western Approaches*.

One afternoon, when the sun was red with autumn light, I was taken by car up the twisting road which leads through

the suburbs to the Barrandov hill overlooking the river-valley of the Vltava. There were the studio buildings at the top with a wonderful sweeping view of the green countryside over the valley. The huge castle set for an historical film called *Rohac of Dube*, a story of the period of the Bohemian Protestant reformer, Huss, filled about half an acre with stone walls, turrets, drawbridge and straw-filled courtyard. Behind this were the large studios left by the Germans; three vast stages which when opened into each other total about four hundred feet in length by a hundred and twenty-five feet in width.

#### VARIABLE QUALITY

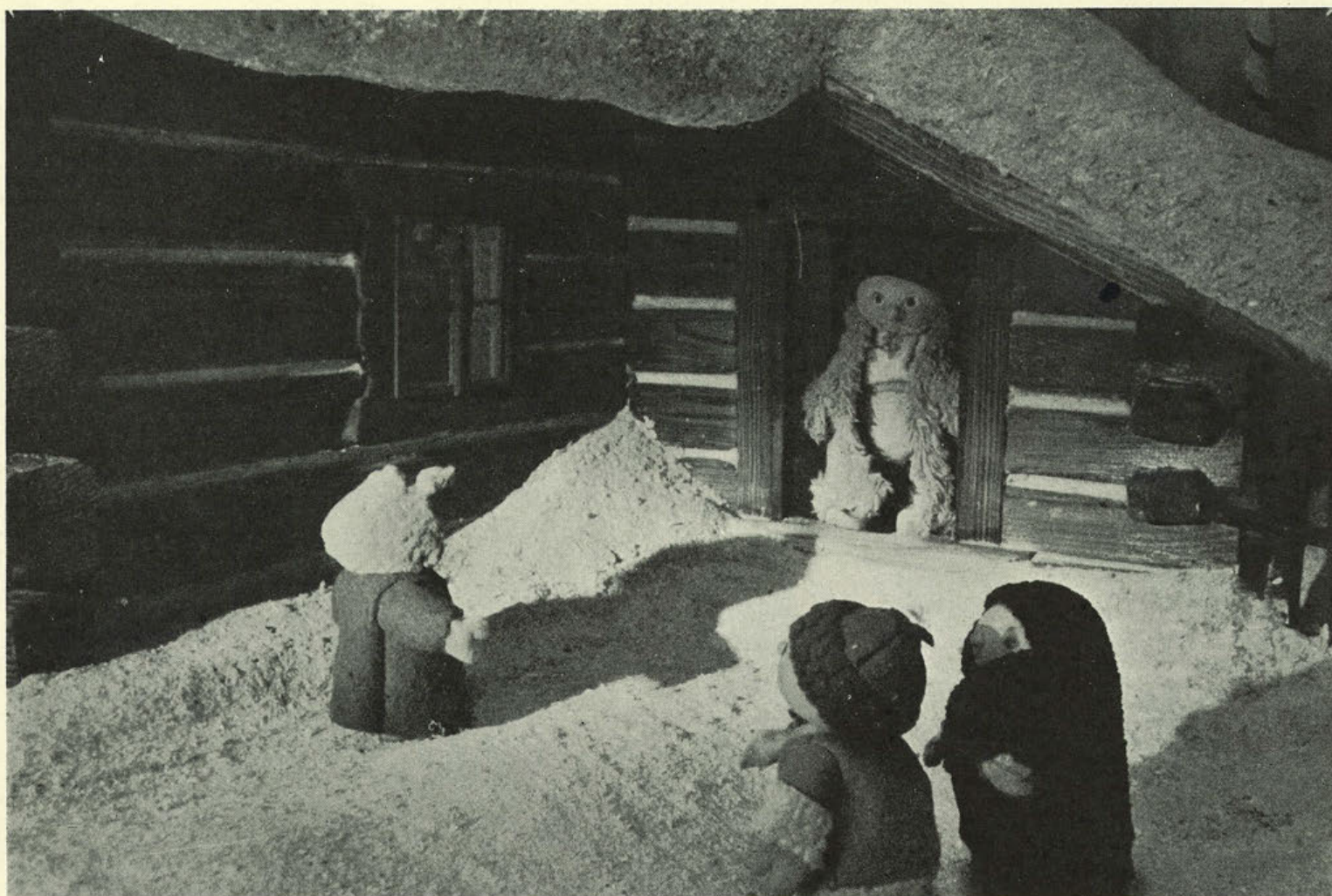
Czech films, such as I was able to see, seemed variable. *Rohac of Dube*, of which I was shown some sections in rough-cut, seemed overtheatrical and wordy. On the other hand, the over-all state plan for production includes many types of films—children's films, educational films, cartoons and puppet films, for example. The puppet films are made at a small studio at Zlin in Moravia. I saw one of these, most beautifully designed and animated, with carefully modelled insects in black and white moving against stylised scenic backgrounds. These films cost far more to make than they can ever earn in the cinemas; but this type of picture is subsidised out of the over-all cinema revenue. The children's film I saw was called *Christmas-Eve Dream*, about a little girl who deserts her old toy doll when a new one is given her. She dreams of the terrible vengeance the neglected doll takes: the whole room is being torn up by a tornado when her conscience finally shakes her awake. I was also able to see the new Czech feature film which was commended so highly at the recent Cannes Film Festival—a Resistance picture called *Men Without Wings*. This film about Czechs working in a German aerodrome near the tragic village of Lidice, was full of a restrained sense of tension and had no happy ending. It was life lived in spite of and against the Nazi occupation. One felt the authenticity as one felt the Czech 'civilism' of this film; its restraint led it into a poetic representation of men and women living a half-life of fear and constrained activity. The airfield had a corner piled high with wreckage, like Paul Nash's painting called 'Totes Meer', the Dead Sea of twisted, finished scraps from planes which once flew. In this waste of torn metal the workers hide their weapons and dodge silently in the darkness to avoid the Gestapo.

#### THE CZECH FILM INDUSTRY

We came to Brno and Bratislava, passing through eastern country where the villages became streets of single-storied houses tinted green and blue and pale clean colours. Driving along roads where Partisans fought, we saw the angular wreckage of tanks and guns buried in the golden leaves of autumn, green metal among trees. In Brno we found the work of another aspect of Czech cinema, the Film Institute.

The Film Institute was founded in 1945 by the Czech Ministry of Information. Its purpose is to raise the standard of Czecho-slovakian films, train technicians, keep international film records and to preserve films of importance, both Czech and foreign. In addition to a film research department dealing with the technical aspect of cinema and the Film School for the training of the new generation of studio technicians, the Archive Section itself collects films,





*From the Czech Puppet Film "I Heard the Bells of Bethlehem Toll"*

photographs, designs for decor and costumes, press notices, gramophone records and all manuscripts connected with the cinema. It has a large library of international film literature, and a most important branch is the Film Publishing House which in its first year is responsible for publishing in translation some sixty international works in film literature. The Institute will also be responsible for the development of a film society and ciné-club movement, which does not yet exist in Czecho-slovakia.

The Institute's Exhibition of the History of the Cinema is the finest collection of apparatus and working models I have seen. It is at present touring the country and we visited it at Brno. Outside the Gallery was a large covered-in series of display panels showing the advantages of nationalisation of the industry. At night a large glass-panelled projecting booth gave open-air exhibitions of films like Chaplin's *Gold Rush*. Inside, the Exhibition began with a life-size façade of the old Bioscope days: through this one entered the introductory section, with its stress on the elements of vision, the importance of the fundamental principles of light and shadow, of the first motion pictures made by hand shadows, examples of Javanese jointed coloured figures, the moving coloured slides of the eighteenth century, Kircher's *Lanterna Magica*, and the magic lanterns of the nineteenth century. The first main section of the Exhibition was made up of electrically-controlled working models demonstrating nineteenth century experiments in apparatus exploiting the persistence

of vision, the thaumatropes, stroboscopes (Plateau and Stampfer) and the Czech version of the stroboscope, Purkyne's *forolyt*. After a demonstration of the principles of still photography, a large explanatory model of Muybridges' experiment with the galloping horse and panels demonstrating the experiments of Marey in the photography of the flight of birds followed. The equipment of Demeny, Reynaud, Edison and Lumière concluded this section: original apparatus and films were on display, together with a working kinetoscope. This extensive collection of apparatus, most of it in working order for demonstration, was the most important part of the exhibition as a whole. The third section showed the history of the cinema from Méliès to the present day, mainly by means of stills. Then came apparatus demonstrating the principles of sound-in-film; again there were working models which visitors could test and watch at will. The last sections dealt with the rise of the Czech film industry, and concluded with a fine display of the technical stages in the production of puppet and cartoon films.

In conclusion, a Czech film week is soon to be held in London so that the British public may see the results of work carried out by this lively and imaginative people in the short while since their liberation. There was a time when it suited a British statesman to say that Czecho-slovakia was a country of which we knew nothing. This is no longer true; through our film interests alone we are now linked in permanent friendship.



# GREEK FILMS, 1946

by

SYDNEY CARTER

"HAVE YOU SEEN the new Greek film?" I asked an Athenian lady. Travelled, cultured and a close follower of new developments in the theatre, she would (I thought) be able to give me some idea of how it appeared to a discriminating Greek. "No," she said, "two of the leading actors in it are communists".

This attitude (shared by a number of the right wing critics) may help to explain why *Forgotten Faces*, directed by George Tsavellos, has not proved the same financial success as his earlier film, *Applause*. It has, furthermore, to face the competition of the American and British pictures which are once again flooding the Greek cinemas; *Applause*, produced during the Occupation, provided a grateful contrast to the German and Italian speaking films which filled the programme, quite apart from any merit. Finally, *Forgotten Faces* suffered from the chief defect of nearly all Greek films—an unconvincing plot. Not even the stout partisan support of the socialist "Machi" which took the line that no film with such a brilliant cast could help being a sound work of art, could sell this unlikely story of a rich man's daughter to the working class.

## ABOVE THE AVERAGE

What lifts *Forgotten Faces* above the average Greek film is the clever camera work of Meravides and the fact that George Tsavellos has shown some originality in his choice of background. Most Greek films tend to take place in a drawing room or in a garden; sometimes the drawing room is a bedroom for a change, or the garden is a field or forest, but it remains completely static. In *Forgotten Faces* we actually move along on the Met. or in a taxi. Much of the action takes place in a billiard saloon, and we explore the tricky byways of old Athens at the foot of the Acropolis. In the billiard scenes especially Meravides lets himself go, using the tension of the game to lend dramatic point to the dialogue. Most of the interiors are shot in semi-darkness; this may well be due to lack of proper lights, but provides, as one critic nicely put it, "all the sad and melancholy atmosphere which fits the interpretation of the players". Both are, if anything, a bit too serious. A theme as indigestible as this needs to be taken with a pinch of salt.

## NOT MUCH PRODUCT

Apart from *Forgotten Faces* this year's crop of films is scanty. There was a short semi-documentary about Greek commandoes in the Aegean which I missed seeing; this is said to have been quite good. *Double Sacrifice*, dealing with the love affairs of two Greek officers (which were treated seriously) and those of their batmen (which were treated as a farce) was the Greek cinema at its most vapid. Only the low music-hall slap and tickle of the batmen bore any resemblance to real life. Christodoulou perpetrated this, and the *Flower-seller of Athens* of Pappandonakis, which

I did not see, was by all accounts no better. Two pictures planned for next year sound more promising. *Slave Labourers*, directed for Novak Films by Pappamichalis, will be about the Occupation. *A Shoe from Your Own Country*, to be produced by Finos Films, may prove to be the first real satire from the Greek cinema. "A shoe from your own country, though patched, is better than one from abroad" a Greek proverb says. The shoe from abroad is an English soldier. Engaged to a Greek girl, he is suddenly posted (as frequently happens) to another part of Greece. Ashamed to face her family without him the girl gets her unsuccessful suitor (played by the gifted Greek comedian Elivaditis) to impersonate the Englishman. By the time he is finally unmasked by the family he has played his rôle so well that he no longer needs the borrowed glamour of a battledress. Greek marries Greek, and all ends happily.

## TALENT

Will the Greek cinema produce a masterpiece? The prospect, at the moment, is not good. Not for lack of local talent. Meravides can handle a camera with imagination as well as taste; Tsavellos and Ioannopoulos are directors with ideas, and there is no shortage of dramatic talent. The Greek theatre, in contrast to the Greek cinema, is enjoying a minor renaissance at the present time. Greece has already given one actress of outstanding ability, Paxinou, to the international cinema, and there are plenty more where she came from. There is no shortage of serious minded writers of ability; George Tsavellos, who made *Forgotten Faces*, had a far better play running simultaneously at the Kotopouli Theatre. Nor is there any lack of examples; Athens may not always get the latest films, but it surpasses London or New York in variety. Not only British and American but French and Swedish films are shown as a matter of course; Russian films, it is true, have not been shown since the right wing victory in the elections at the beginning of this year — last year there were two or three showing at a single time — but Turkish, Czech and Hungarian films can still be seen. Film criticism is often of a high quality; neither critics nor the general public are under any illusions as to the quality of most Greek films.

The difficulty is financial. No Greek film can ever make much money. There are only eight million Greek speaking people in the world, most of them miles from any cinema. It is hard to find a backer for a film — for a play, which is cheaper, it is easier; and when one is found, he is not inclined to put his money into anything experimental. The drachma has remained at a steady level for some months now, but the political future is uncertain still. Greeks feel that they live on a frontier: on one side Russia, on the other Britain and America. Greek internal politics, the hopes and plans of individuals, the movements of capital, are all governed by this fundamental anxiety. In spite of their deep





*Czech Film Festival—the Hraje Symphony Orchestra and Muir Mathieson (see opposite page)*

love for the soil of Greece, which makes the immigrant return after a life-time in America, most of the Greeks you ask now would give a great deal to get away from it. Investors therefore are shy of putting money into anything, least of all into such a shaky risk as films. Equipment of every kind is lacking or worn out, while all photographic materials are subject to a heavy tax. Films are made in holes and corners therefore, mostly with oddments that the Germans left behind. *Forgotten Faces*, after being shelved six months owing to fluctuations in the currency, was finally rushed through in a bare ten weeks. Hardly any props were used; it had to be shot at dead of night after the club and billiard saloon in which much of the action takes place had closed. The total cost of the film was £2,700! Ever since the introduction of sound, which increased costs and made it harder for a film to sell outside the linguistic frontiers of Greece, Greek films have been severely handicapped. The advent of colour will make matters worse.

Only in the limited field of documentary may Greek films find it possible to hold their own. The Commando film, already mentioned, suggests a move in this direction. In this connection it is worth noting that the Greek Government have sent a young producer, Alexandrakis, formerly associated with Tsavellos, to Ottawa to study the methods of the National Film Board of Canada.

Whether the cinematic possibilities of Greece will be exploited by foreign producers is another question. N. C.

Read, of the National Film Board of Canada, spent three months in Greece last year filming the work of UNRRA. Some of his material has since been used in his half-hour documentary, *Out of the Ruins*. This touches on more aspects of Greek landscape and Greek life than any Greek-made film which I have seen to date; particularly noteworthy is the way in which Louis Applebaum has woven traditional Greek melodies into the sound. *March of Time* also made a film in Greece last year. What may be even more significant is the fact that American Greek War Relief have commissioned Tsavellos to make a film about conditions in Greece. Not only will this be the first colour film of Greece; it will be the first time a foreign agency have employed a Greek director to do the job.

Finally, now that expeditions to Australia, Egypt and India have become an almost normal thing in British films, there is always the chance that someone may discover Greece. The story of some of the Australian, British and New Zealand troops who were left behind in 1940, to say nothing of that curious company of classical scholars and commandoes who came in by boat or parachute while the Germans were still there must be unrivalled for dramatic possibilities. Then, of course, there are the Classics, and the Journeys of St. Paul. In some stupendous American or British foray such as this, local Greek talent may yet play its part in adding a new Province to the Empire of the screen.



# BRITISH FILM MUSIC AND WORLD MARKETS

By

JOHN HUNTLEY

AMONG THE ASPECTS of British film production that have helped to create a good impression in the export market is the use of music in our pictures. From a large collection of individual items of film music news noted down during 1946, perhaps four will be sufficient to illustrate the general trend.

## CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SOCIETY

It was during the summer months that the International Society for Contemporary Music assembled in London for a series of concerts and discussions which included a visit to the British Council Theatre for a session of film music. Ernest Irving, music director of Ealing Studios, presided over the meeting and introduced the delegates to some interesting extracts from the sound tracks of his own music department. Three films were represented; *The Foreman Went to France* (William Walton), *Pink String and Sealing Wax* (Norman Demuth) and *The Captive Heart* (Alan Rawsthorne). In each case, a sequence from the film was screened, followed by a run-through of the music track on its own. As an encore, Irving presented an interesting puppet picture (made for the Children's Clubs) called *The Good Samaritan*, with a score written by the Ealing music director himself and introducing some Mozart. To conclude the programme, Basil Wright screened two examples of music in documentary films. First came *The Last Shot* (music by Guy Warrack), followed by *Jungle Mariner* (music by Elizabeth Lutyens).

## FILM FESTIVAL AT CANNES

One of the notable features of Britain's entries in the Cannes Film Festival back in September, 1946, was the attention given to music in our exhibits. Apart from the fact that all our pictures carried distinguished sound tracks—*Caesar and Cleopatra* (Georges Auric), *The Captive Heart* (Alan Rawsthorne)—the most successful item was backed by Muir Mathieson conducting the National Symphony Orchestra in Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, with Eileen Joyce at the piano; the film of course is Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter*. Likewise *The Seventh Veil* was unanimously voted as pleasing to the ear, the music including the Rachmaninoff Concerto, the Grieg A Minor, and a number of other extracts from the realms of serious composition.

Among the educational films entered for the Festival was the Crown Film Unit production *Instruments of the Orchestra*, featuring the Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell (Benjamin Britten), played by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. This fascinating lesson in the fundamentals of a symphony orchestra was directed by Muir Mathieson at Pinewood Studios; the delightful score is available on a set of three Columbia gramophone records.

## SHAKESPEARE IN AMERICA

The reaction of the American press to the Laurence Olivier production of *Henry V* constitutes an absorbing example of overseas comment on British films of quality. From "Life's" article "Movie of the Week" to the famous review in "Time" magazine ("One of the Greatest Experiences in the History of Motion Pictures") the United States film critics were unanimous in their unstinted praise. From the files of "Film Music Notes", journal of the National Film Music Council of America, comes a special issue of this magazine devoted entirely to the music William Walton wrote for this screen interpretation of a classic of English literature. "Like all works that can truly be described as art", they wrote, "*Henry V* will enrich its beholders in proportion to their ability to absorb all aspects of its beauty, not only the beauty of the Shakespearean language, the quality of Mr. Olivier's and his supporting cast's performance, the magnificence of its color, costumes and settings, but also the masterful achievement of William Walton's musical score". Full data on the picture was circulated to every music school and university in the country, while special concerts and lectures on *Henry V* are still in progress throughout the States at present.

## THE PRAGUE FILM FESTIVAL

One of the highlights of the Prague Film Festival of 1946 was the concert of film music presented and conducted by Muir Mathieson, which formed the grand finale to a most successful film season. In the magnificent Smetana Hall, the Hraje Symphony Orchestra presented the following programme:—

"Spitfire Prelude and Fugue". (William Walton).

From the film *First of the Few*.

"Suite from the film *49th Parallel*. (Ralph Vaughan Williams).

"Calypso Music". (William Alwyn).

From the film *The Rake's Progress*.

"Suite from the film *Henry V*. (William Walton).

"Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Purcell" (Benjamin Britten).

From the film *Instruments of the Orchestra*.

"Seascape". (Clifton Parker).

From the film *Western Approaches*.

"Suite from the film *Things to Come*". (Arthur Bliss).

"Waltz into Jig". (John Greenwood).

From the film *Hungry Hill*.

"Suite from the film *Malta G.C.*" (Arnold Bax).

Perhaps the most popular item in a concert that received the most enthusiastic reception was the Benjamin Britten music to Muir Mathieson's own picture, *Instruments of the Orchestra*. The Prague press were impressed and said so: "in England the musical part of the film is given to outstanding composers and these artists have a thorough knowledge of musical creation for Films . . . Muir Mathieson's leadership of the orchestra is experienced, his attack is clear and musically sensitive" (Filmova Prace) . . .

Today the once obscure "background" music to British films is making a valuable appeal to the new world markets now opening up to our productions as it continues to advance, under the sure guidance of such men as Muir Mathieson, to maintain Britain's sound tracks "second to none".



# FILM MUSIC—

## SOME OBJECTIONS

By

HANS KELLER

THE MOST SERIOUS FLAW about articles on film music is their scarcity. Next comes the fact that they treat of good, not of bad film music. Their authors look for occasions—Walton, Vaughan Williams, Bax, Bliss, Rawsthorne—for being appreciative, and shun occasions for being critical. Such an attitude on the critic's part, when applied to a field crammed full of gems, is not only noble, but also aesthetically expedient. But when one starts concentrating exclusively on some islands of hope in an (unfortunately not salty, but sugary) sea of—the reader, I trust, agrees. William Alwyn (*The Way Ahead*, *Desert Victory*) is annoyed if referred to as “film composer”. Why? Because (as is reported) “he dislikes labels”? I am sure Benjamin Britten also dislikes labels, and I am equally sure he isn't annoyed if you call him an opera composer. The difference is simply that there is a great deal of good opera music, and that there is a great deal of bad film music, so that one feels stale if people associate one too closely with the latter, even if one thinks, as Alwyn does, that “there is a great deal of interesting experimentation to be done in this field”. No doubt there is.

One compliment that can be paid to film composers whose work is responsible for, say, a radio critic's aside: “. . . irrelevant music (that eternal damned radio music, like the accompaniment to a film) . . .”<sup>1</sup> is that they seem to possess a considerable knowledge of (some) serious, semi-serious, and pseudo-serious musical literature. Enter your cinema, and you will soon find yourself (if you are lucky) somewhere in Chopin, Gounod, Tschaikowsky, Grieg, the more sentimental regions of Elgar, Puccini, Rachmaninov. . . Somewhere and somehow in one of these provinces: the exact location is of course never given, for this could be of use to the enemy, who is you, unless you like the stuff.

It is fortunate that these film composers (who often exhibit—no, conceal—talent, and are quite obviously playing down to a largely imaginary audience consisting in part of bygone film directors) have not so far ventured on any of the earlier and greater composers. It is a pity that later musical developments (excepting superficial aspects) have passed them by. Or, if they haven't, it is depressing that we are made believe that they have.

There is a general therapeutic measure one can suggest to the composers concerned: that they treat their work with, and their audience to, a diabetic diet, but without saccharin.

Indeed the lyrical sections of many instances of film music, rather than the dramatic parts, make us realize mankind's Original Curse: that, while we can shut our eyes, we cannot shut our ears. This is even true of many a piece of work which, in (non-lyrical) places, is very attractive.

Take Miklos Rosza's music to *Spellbound*.<sup>2</sup> As far as its dramatic—more exactly, thrilling—aspect goes, it is just

what is needed. But the lyrical side spoils everything, not because it is lyrical, but because it isn't, really. To write lyrical film music that is not Kitsch is far more difficult than to write dramatic film music that is not boring.

The kitschy aspect of the *Spellbound* music is represented by its Leitmotiv, a frequent phenomenon in film music. Ernest Irving has pointed out that “it is true that a film may possess a certain unity which permits illustration by a Theme with variations”. What we usually get—the Leitmotiv—is a theme without variations, but with plenty of repetitions. This can be deplorable in a threefold way. Firstly, “love” being the most common element of unity in a film, Leitmotifs naturally have a habit of being on the “lyrical” side. (With apologies to those themes to which the inverted commas do not apply). Secondly [the Leitmotiv's chances of being saccharoid having thus been heightened] its repetitions make it more of an emetic than if it appeared only once upon the musical scene. Lastly, even if it happens to be a pleasing theme, the fact that its repetitions depend on extra-musical rather than on intra-musical conditions, makes the repetitions liable to be a bore. [Though in opera the rôle of music is more predominant, even some of Wagner's (an indubitable master's) Leitmotifs have proved too much for post-adolescent nerves.]

Charles Williams' music to *Quiet Weekend* spoils itself in a similar way as *Spellbound*. It would be easily flowing, humorous, bearably sentimental nonsense—in fact just the right thing for this film—but for the inevitable Leitmotiv.

*Quiet Weekend* illustrates a further very widely prevalent affliction, i.e. the lack of a distinction between background and foreground music.

One generally hears the same sort of thing, or actually the same thing, being played whether or not there is, acoustically, something (usually talk) in front of the music. The only difference that is being made is that, as background music, the (ir)relevant passage is rendered softly.

Strictly speaking all film music is of course background music, but it is such in various degrees: Relative foreground music, i.e. music accompanying silence (silent action, emotional tension) should obviously have greater weight than music to which the listener cannot devote his undivided aural attention. Nicholas Brodsky's music to *Beware of Pity* offers just as striking an instance of this neglect of back- and foreground as *Quiet Weekend*.

In *From This Day Forward* (the music of which, by Leigh Hasline, is on the whole undisturbingly monotonous: very background indeed) the musical section of the audience is tortured by some dramatic-tragic talk being put across to the accompaniment—provided by the hero who has switched on the wireless—of the 1st movement (exposition) of Mozart's G Minor Symphony! There can hardly be a more terrifying example of music being misused for background purposes.

To sum up, either film music will corrupt musical understanding and taste, or musical understanding and taste will have to demand better, and more sensitively used, film music. We know what Oscar Wilde, in one of his American lectures, called “the only rational method of art criticism I have ever come across”, i.e. a notice printed over a piano in a dancing saloon: “Please do not shoot the pianist: he is doing his best”.

Many a film composer isn't.

<sup>1</sup> J. V. Ste-Maxime, in “New Statesman” Aug. 31st.

<sup>2</sup> I am trying to bring, as examples, films old enough to be widely known, and young enough to be still remembered.



# JACQUES PRÉVERT—SCRIPT-WRITER AND POET

By

HAZEL HACKETT

FOR THOSE ACQUAINTED with his work, it is almost superfluous to state that Jacques Prévert was born in Paris in 1900. The language and content of his poetry, like the dialogue in his films, bear the mark of a Parisian living in, and aware of his own century, and spring directly from the lives of ordinary people, and in particular, the people of Paris.

He was 31 when he published in the review "Commerce" his first story-poem, the famous "Tentative de Description d'un Dîner de Têtes à Paris-France". A year later he wrote and made with his brother Pierre his first film *L'Affaire est dans le Sac*. Since that time he has written constantly—poems, stories, film-scenarios and dialogues—but it was not until the beginning of this year that the first collected edition of his poems was published. It has been aptly called "Paroles", and in fact the task of tracing them in odd newspapers and reviews, and recovering them from private individuals for whom they had been casually scribbled, was as difficult as collecting the spoken poems and stories that lived by word-of-mouth in the Middle Ages. The end of this year has seen also the release of his latest film with Marcel Carné, *Les Portes de la Nuit*, which, with the some dozen films that have appeared in the interval, is immediately recognisable as the work of Prévert. The themes of his films have varied but in all of them Prévert keeps his own unmistakable way of saying things, and his own personal attitude to the world—a consistency of style which we expect from the better novelists but scarcely hope to find among writers for the cinema.

## DREAMS OF THE HUMBLE

At the present time, Prévert is one of the most discussed—and the most elusive—figures in Paris. His poems are quoted in all circles, sung to the nostalgic melodies of Kosma, and recited in the intimacy of little review theatres like that of Agnès Capri in Montparnasse. His films are always awaited with interest and eagerness not only for what they achieve but also for what they attempt. Prévert, the most unliterary of poets, and the most poetical of script-writers, has made articulate the workmen, the charwomen, the shop-girls, the humble people of Paris. In his poems and films he uses their language, their clichés, their bons mots and their proverbs, always with a freshness that gives them the spontaneity of extempore speech, and often with a slight twist so that we seem to hear them as if for the first time. He is completely unselfconscious in the political sense, but at the same time he associates himself instinctively with that almost unconscious solidarity with which the poor and defenceless of the world face the rich and powerful, and he shares with them their disrespect for all forms of authority—clerical, military, bureaucratic—

institutions which, they dimly feel, are in some way responsible for their misery.

## TWISTED LOGIC

*L'Affaire est dans le Sac*, his first film, tells the story of a pathetic little millionaire who cries continually because he is bored, and only becomes happy when he is kidnapped and held to ransom by the crazy owner of a hatshop, whose special gift is the imitation of animal noises. The idea is slight, simply a pretext for the introduction of half-crazy types battered by life and all with their personal idiosyncrasies that make them living human beings, while at the same time typical Prévert characters. No-one who has seen the film will easily forget the man whose one desire in life was to buy a béret "un simple béret, un béret français"; nor the other who liked to read his newspaper while walking along the street, and when he bumped into people, attacked them furiously for not looking where they were going—"C'est à vous à faire attention. Moi, je lis . . . je ne peux pas faire deux choses à la fois"—an example of Prévert's twisted personal logic. *L'Affaire* romps along with all the amateur's spirit of zest and enthusiasm, a rare chef d'œuvre of burlesque among French films, and one of the perennial treats in the Ciné-Clubs.

*L'Oiseau Rare* with its parrot "cent pro cent parlant . . . et français bien entendu", was his next venture, followed by *Le Crime de M. Lange*, on which he worked with Jean Renoir. In 1936, *Jenny* inaugurated the Prévert-Carné collaboration, which, during the next ten years was to be responsible for some of the most distinguished French films.

## LOVABLE CHARACTERS

*Jenny* is a story of rather shady people, who are also essentially human and "sympathique", and who speak in that Prévert language which gives an everyday phrase a new meaning and makes the ordinary poetical. "Bien sûr, ça change, et plus ça change, plus c'est pire" observes the cynical young Lucien. And the wise old man says sadly to the spoiled young one "Vous n'aimez personne. C'est l'argent que vous aimez. C'est pas de votre faute. Vous avez les poches pleines et le cœur vide. On ne peut tout avoir"—an example of Prévert's genius for the concise pictorial statement. In his next film *Drôle de Drame*, he worked again with his brother Pierre to produce a mixture of farce, satire and melodrama with surrealist touches reminiscent of the most inspired fooling of the Marx Brothers. Here also the lovable characters are the underlings of this world, the bored cook, the story-telling milkboy, the pretty typist, the





*Farrabique*

sentimental murderer of butchers; and the people ridiculed are the learned botanist, the puritanical bishop, the stupid detective, the unscrupulous journalist. When the murderer explains that it suits him to kill butchers because "de ma nature je suis plutôt sensible . . . jamais fait de mal à une mouche . . . j'aime bien les bêtes . . . tandis que les bouchers eux, ils les tuent les animaux . . . alors moi, je tue les bouchers, vous comprenez", you immediately feel that he is more humane than the botanist who catches flies to feed alive to his plants.

#### ENTER CARNÉ

*Quai des Brumes*, made with Carné in 1938, brought the team an immediate success vis à vis the general public. It is a film whose implacable realism offers no solution for the tangled lives of its characters—the deserter from the army, the unsuccessful painter, the lonely young girl, the spoiled young man. It is full of a sincere natural poetry that seems to spring directly from the speaker's mind, as if he were thinking aloud, as when for instance the painter explains why he is a failure:—" . . . j'aurais tellement aimé peindre de jolies choses . . . j'ai essayé, j'ai peint des fleurs, des jeunes femmes, des enfants . . . et c'était comme si je peignais le crime . . . Si je peins un arbre, ça met tout le monde mal à l'aise. C'est parce qu'il y a quelque chose, ou quelque'un caché derrière cet arbre. Je peins malgré moi les choses cachées derrière les choses." And Nelly expresses simply her almost hopeless hope of happiness "Chaque fois que le jour se lève, on croit qu'il va se passer quelque chose de nouveau . . . quelque chose de frais. Et puis le jour se couche, et puis on fait comme lui . . . c'est triste".

*Le Jour se Lève* was made, again with Carné, just as war started, and was followed by *Remorques* with Jean Grémillon. When the Germans occupied half of France, Prévert took himself off to the Unoccupied Zone and made his least successful film, *Le Soleil a Toujours Raison*,

with the Italian-tenor-type actor, Tino Rossi, observing laconically that he preferred to collaborate with him rather than with the Germans. The film, however, is not without charm and has some delightful characters, notably the old man who cannot bear bright colours, or arguments, or sunshine. "Je trouve ça idiot, le soleil . . . C'est bête comme un coq. Ça fait du bruit . . . j'aime le silence, j'aime ce qui est plat—la lune, elle est calme, elle est propre, elle est plate". And it also contains a perfect example of Prévert's visual dialogue—"La plus heureuse, la plus jolie fille, peut tenir dans ses mains en creux, un peu d'eau fraîche; c'est pour elle tout le bonheur du monde. Mais brusquement, quelque chose se passe, les mains de la jolie fille tremblent—le bonheur, tout disparaît".

#### BETWEEN DUSK AND DAWN

1942 found him working again with Carné on the famous *Visiteurs du Soir*, inspired by a mediæval folk-story, and the first move away from realism in the direction of the art film. This was followed by the strange poetical *Lumière d'Été* with Jean Grémillon, and in 1943 by *L'Honorable Léonard*. This is a particularly refreshing film which he made with his brother, a farcical story, with social implications, of the struggle of the unimportant simple people of this world, "les hommes qui aiment les petits métiers", against the rich man with the big plans and the complicated minds. In 1945, came with Carné *Les Enfants du Paradis*, the greatest artistic achievement to date of the French cinema, over-long, a bit too theatrical but with a sense of period amounting to genius, and the poetry of last century life in Paris in almost every foot of it. Their latest film, *Les Portes de la Nuit*, came back to Paris in February, 1945, a few months after the Liberation and just before the end of the European war. The action takes place between dusk—when the gates of the Metro shut and the gates of the Paris night open—and dawn, when the gates of reality swing back again and the gates of dream close. The film gives us an undramatised picture of the Paris of that troubled time—a Paris elated because the Germans have gone, proud of her resistants, bitter towards the men of the militia and the "double jeu", weighed down by material difficulties, corrupted by the black market—and yet with her sordidness pierced by the tenderness of a human relationship, the small act of kindness, the flash of humour that lights up the lives of the poor. It is Paris herself that emerges as the star of the film—almost every line of dialogue has the authentic accent of her people, the sound-track gives the noises and cries of her streets, and the camera reproduces the infinite variety of her beauty. The human beings are less satisfactory, particularly Yves Montand and Nathalie Nattier, who are uneasy in a scenario originally intended for Jean Gabin and Marlene Dietrich. In their over-long love-scene, the film collapses into an emotional unreality and loses its way in a maze of coincidences that make the sequence like a parody of Carné and Prévert by an over-zealous, under-talented disciple. But the film offers some superb moments of pure cinema, the outstanding one being the suicide of the militiaman, (superbly played by Serge Reggiani), and it has succeeded in an amazing way in capturing and putting on celluloid the elusive loveliness of the poor quarters of Paris. The only other film comparable in this respect is the documentary *Aubervilliers*, made this year by Emile Lotar from a script



by Prévert, on the worst slum district in Paris, and which conveys most movingly through ugliness and misery the gleam—poetic or divine as you please—that is inextinguishable where there is human life.

Prévert is now working on a new film, *L'Arch de Noë*, which concerns a modern ark peopled with characters of to-day—a millionaire, a gangster, an actor, an inventor, young men with ideas, young women with beauty—and he has entrusted the direction to an almost unknown man of 26, Henri Jacques. The film promises to be in the near-burlesque tradition, in that world between waking and sleeping, between walking and dancing, which is Prévert's special sphere.

When he turns to poetry, it is as if he brought to it the economy of gesture of the cinema, and the clear outline of the photographed object or event. He is not concerned to convey his sensations or any vision of an inner life, but contents himself with pure description, leaving the sensations and reflections to you. His poetry is a quick, spontaneous seizing in words, a series of verbal snapshots, of incidents and events illustrating the life of ordinary people of to-day.

*"Il a mis le café  
Dans la tasse  
Il a mis le lait  
Dans la tasse de café  
Il a mis le sucre  
Dans le café au lait . . .  
Il a bu le café au lait  
Et il a reposé la tasse  
Sans me parler . . .  
Et il est parti  
Sous la pluie  
Sans une parole  
Sans me regarder  
Et moi j'ai pris  
Ma tête dans ma main  
Et j'ai pleuré."*

That, from "Le Déjeuner du Matin" is a scene in slow motion.

*"Une pierre  
deux maisons  
trois ruines  
quatre fossoyeurs  
un jardin  
des fleurs"*

that, the beginning of "Inventaire", is speeded-up imagery, a kind of verbal montage.

And it is bitterness that prompts this twisting of a well-known quotation—"Ils n'iront plus aux bois, les jambes sont coupées", and satire expressed not in the words but in the picture given in the short and lovely "La Belle Saison"

*"A jeun perdue glacée  
Toute seule sans un sou  
Une fille de seize ans  
Immobile debout  
Place de la Concorde  
A midi le Quinze Août"*

Prévert attacks furiously the powerful institutions of our world—the President of the Republic, the industrialists, the colonisers in the long "Dîner de Têtes"—

*"ceux qui donnent des canons aux enfants,  
ceux qui donnent des enfants aux canons . . .  
ceux qui ont quatre mille huit cent dix mètres de Mont  
Blanc, trois cents de Tour Eiffel, vingt-cinq centi-  
mètres de tour de poitrine et qui en sont fiers"*

And in the same poem he speaks for

*"ceux qui fabriquent dans les caves les stylos avec  
lesquels d'autres écriront en plein air que tout va pour  
la meux . . .  
ceux qui ont le pain quotidien relativement hebdomadaire,  
ceux qui n'ont jamais vu la mer . . .  
ceux qui crèvent d'ennui le dimanche après-midi parce  
qu'ils voient venir le lundi  
et le mardi, et le mercredi, et le jeudi, et le vendredi,  
et le samedi  
et le dimanche après-midi"*

In those last lines, there is all the dreary uneventfulness of the life of the poor.

In "La Crosse en l'Air", and in "Pater Noster", his anti-clericalism is furiously expressed—

*"Notre Père qui êtes aux cieux  
Restez-y",*

and in "Quartier Libre", he uses a delicious humour to attack the military conventions:—

*"J'ai mis mon képi dans la cage  
et je suis sorti avec l'oiseau sur la tête  
alors  
on ne salue pas  
a demandé le commandant.  
Non  
on ne salue pas  
a répondu l'oiseau  
Ah bon  
excusez-moi je croyais qu'on saluait  
a dit le commandant  
Vous êtes tout excusé tout le monde peut se  
tromper a dit l'oiseau"*

Jacques Prévert was at one time among the surrealists and their influence has left its trace on his work. In his verbal reconstruction of our contemporary world, he puts oddly assorted words and events together like objects in a surrealist picture, with a result that shocks us into a new understanding, and an awareness of the wonder that, often unsuspected, surrounds us. "A tous les coins de rue il rencontre les merveilles du monde et il leur dit bonjour".

So he said of his friend Andre Verdet.

*"un monde sans savoir-faire mais plein  
de joie de vivre  
un monde sobre et ivre  
un monde triste et gai  
tendre et cruel  
réel et surréel  
terrifiant et marrant  
nocturne et divine  
solite et insolite  
beau comme tout"*

So he speaks of the world of Picasso. But it is himself and his own world that Prévert has most accurately described, and it is his way of saying bonjour to the things and people of that world that has made him unique among French poets and script-writers.



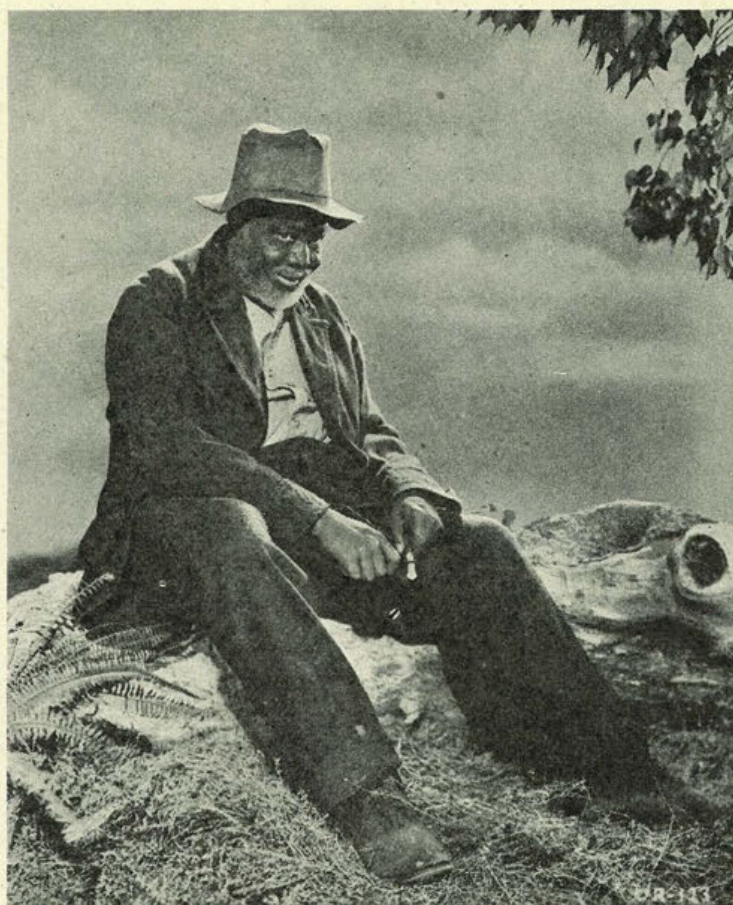
# THE DREAMS THAT MONEY CAN BUY

Herman G. Weinberg writes  
from America . . . .

HANS RICHTER's first American feature film, *Dreams That Money Can Buy*, is a surprise—and a most pleasant surprise. It comprises six sequences, in colour, inspired by the work of as many modern painters—Fernand Léger, Max Ernst, Marcel Duchamps, Alexander Calder, Man Ray and Richter himself—bound together by a frame story in black and white. Music for the various sequences is by Edgar Varèse, Paul Bowles, John Cage, Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, Duke Ellington. Based on a preview of the film in its silent first rough cut, it is easily the most startling and original film of the year and should have a world-wide success. For here, fantasy and wit have been wedded to produce something for the adults, for a change, and Disney, for all his protean achievements in the past, might well pause a moment and look at it. For the first time, painters are working with colour on the screen, not set designers with the souls of interior decorators, and the result is often ravishing to the eye. Léger's mannequins raffishly satirize love à la *Americain* so succinctly that a whole Lubitsch film is compressed into a few minutes, while Max Ernst's wry study in libido and frustration opens up the first new vista in the psychoanalytical interpretation of dreams on the screen since Pabst's *Secrets of a Soul*—and that was a long time ago. Richter's own *Narcissus* stems also from Freud's *Totem and Tabu*, and is the most violent, daring and imaginative sequence in the film. Calder's tinkling celestial solar system composed of his mobiles are Klee and Miro come suddenly to charming life, while his *Circus* has the ubiquitous *danse du ventre* exhilaratingly performed by a little hussy who would have laughed at Anatole France's admonishment to the *petite fille* he picked up, "Don't confuse motion with pleasure my dear!" Marcel Duchamps' spiral-abstractions with their sensual movements and the live animation of his famous cubistic *Nude Descending the Stairs* broken up as a counterpoint to the spirals, and Man Ray's gentle kidding of the movies in his *Ruth, Roses and Revolvers*, complete the six episodes around which Richter is currently at work providing a satirical "frame" out of modern life, the *deus ex machina* of which will be a "juke box". That Richter was able to carry off this *tour-de-force* in the quadruple role of producer-writer-director-designer\* is in itself a minor miracle when one thinks of the methods and resources of Hollywood.

Of course, through the sheer weight of money and what it can buy, other than dreams, when the buyer happens to have taste, Hollywood sometimes makes a good film. Such a one is *The Best Years of Our Lives*, dealing with the readjustment of three Americans, a bombardier, an infantry

\* His assistant was Miriam Raeburn and chief cameraman Arnold Eagle.



*Song of the South*

R.K.O. Radio

sergeant and a sailor, to civilian life. It has everything it should have—a literate and often sharp and honest script by Robert E. Sherwood, supple direction by William Wyler, and is ingratiatingly played by at least one actor—Frederic March. Its touches of human frailty make one realize the almost total lack of that sort of thing in most American films and it achieves its statements of social criticism without the edge of bitterness. In short, everything about it is "well-bred", on whatever social strata the action plays, and, if this is a carry-over of the conventional slickness that is synonymous with Hollywood films, it is none the less possible to get across, even on these terms, an honest statement of fact and resolve it without undue compromise. This, Sherwood and Wyler have done. Occasionally the dialogue stings as words can sometimes sting so that nothing can ever erase them—and that is the strength of the film. Yet even on its own grounds it achieves one superb moment as a film, sans words, as a true film should—when the bombardier, looking for employment, in despair climbs up into the forward gunbay of a dismantled bomber on a field of thousands of dismantled bombers, and re-lives for a dazed moment his war years there and the camera moves back to show the four hubs on the plane's wings, empty of their engines—like the prosthetic hooks on the returned sailor's arms, which are similarly empty of their hands. It was, also, amusing to see how Wyler "throws away" (in the parlance of the theatre) a touch at the beginning of the film that von Stroheim originated and made much of 25 years ago in *Foolish Wives*. I won't give it away here. All in all, a sometimes curiously unmoving film (because it should *always* have been moving) and yet one worth seeing. If you really want the rest of the picture of what war is, you can always read Latzko's *Men in War* or Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Get Your Gun*.



# ESCAPISM AND SOVIET CULTURE

By

CATHERINE DE LA ROCHE

THE RECENT BAN in the U.S.S.R. on a number of films, plays and magazines has raised several questions in the minds of people abroad. Why should the importance of ideology in art be brought into prominence at this particular time? How did the tendency to escapism develop? To what extent is creative freedom restricted in the Soviet Union?

These and other questions can be answered, in part at least, if the recent measures are viewed against the background of the past, and especially in relation to the present effort of reconstruction and the Five Year Plans. Also, Soviet spokesmen have had some illuminating things to say since the news first broke.

Ideology has been regarded as the foundation of all the arts since the earliest days of Soviet rule. More particularly, the importance of interpreting contemporary reality and showing Soviet people as the product of a new society has been stressed ever since the 1930's when the first generation brought up in Socialist principles had grown up.

In the cinema, for instance, modern themes have headed each of the recent yearly film schedules. These also include a variety of other subjects, but all conform to the principles of socialist realism. In other words, they are supposed to have interest for society as a whole and to be connected, even if indirectly, with reality. Never-never-lands and ivory towers have been out of the running since 1917.

But there's a snag. It is infinitely easier, especially in the theatre and films, to produce historical or classical subjects than to find enough creative writers capable of dramatising present-day themes, a problem which is appreciated well enough by Soviet critics.

## SCREENWRITERS LACKING

Literature was somewhat better off in this respect and, not unnaturally, the film folk have been making a concerted effort ever since before the war to get some of the big writers interested in cinema. A few, such as Gorbатов and Simonov, responded, but still there are not enough. The fact that of the 51 Stalin prize awards for 1945 only seven went to screenwriters is regarded as a sad indication of the weakness of the script department. And the root of the trouble in the banned films were the scenarios.

These films, planned long ago, were made during the war. Two were war stories and one historical, so the trouble here was neither escapism nor triviality. *Great Life* by Lukov was withdrawn after being approved for release, because critics described it in the press as bad filmcraft and an insult to the Donbas people represented as immoral and ignorant. *Simple People* by Kozintzev and Trauberg about Leningrad evacuees was banned for similar reasons: "How many times", writes 'Soviet Art', "has a hurricane scene been introduced solely as compensation for the absence of spiritual meaning? . . . Endeavouring to put life into a stillborn story they make the heroine quote Juliet's monologue, but even Shakespeare cannot help". Another critic is indignant because the characters in the film are

divided into heroes—and the crowd, possessing no apparent virtues, both categories being equally false.

Critics declare that in Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*, part 2, the emphasis is on court intrigue, no true and comprehensive idea of the epoch is given and history has only been used as a pretext for formalistic experiments. Ivan himself, essentially a strong character, is shown as weak and undecided, more reminiscent of Hamlet, while his progressive troops are made to resemble a band of the Ku Klux Klan.

## NEED FOR DIVERSITY

It would be wrong to conclude that historical subjects have therefore suddenly come into disfavour. But, since the year before last, the proportion of modern subjects has tended to decrease so much that, in the original schedule of 40 features for 1946-7, history, classics, musicals, etc., accounted for more than two thirds of the total. The revised list does not exclude any one category, and the half dozen historical subjects originally planned have been retained. But the proportion of modern themes has been increased, chiefly at the expense of classics, and the biggest writers have been assigned to script them.

The need for diversity in stories which would reveal the many-sidedness of life is a dominant note in practically everything written or said about the cinema. The emphasis on modern subjects is not intended to limit the writers' scope, but to widen it and to stimulate them in creating original works instead of harping on old themes. Nevertheless, various stories get recognition if they are considered good of their kind: of the three latest features to be awarded Stalin prizes, one was a war story and two were classics. And among the films that have recently done well, the subjects range from a colour fantasy on Ural folklore, *The Stone Flower*, to a film about Stalin and 20 years of Soviet history, entitled *The Vow*, which is currently having outstanding success throughout the U.S.S.R.

## FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

The state of affairs in the theatre was considered worse. Here the proportion of contemporary subjects in some of the biggest theatres fell as low as three out of twenty, of the few plays dealing with Soviet themes many were by inferior playwrights and gave a false picture, while the mass of other subjects, including foreign plays, were often not the best of their kind. Among the latter were *Le Petit Café* by Bernard, *The Dangerous Age* by Pinero, and *The Circle* by Maugham, which were regarded as reactionary in outlook and morals.

The fundamental issues involved emerge most clearly from the story of the two magazines: "Leningrad" (banned) and "Zvezda" (reorganised). Zoschenko, a popular humourist, recently gained an influential position on the editorial boards of both journals, this in spite of having been



criticised for representing Soviet people as "shameless creatures" in a war story. When his "Adventures of a Monkey"—the story that caused the trouble—appeared, critics saw in it not an isolated case, but the worst features of Zoschenko's preoccupation with the basest specimens of humanity and a return to his trend of the 1920's when he was influenced by the supernatural and macabre side of Hoffman's work, even borrowing Hoffman's 'Serapion-brüder' as the name for a literary circle he founded. The circle's guiding principle was "art for art's sake".

The poet Akhmatova, also given prominence in both magazines recently, had advocated the same principle since before the first world war. She is criticised for poems which are a combination of religious mysticism with eroticism and a sense of doom, for seeking to hide a lack of ideas in formalistic extravagance, and her notion of a woman's calling is considered an affront to modern womanhood. Other writers began imitating these two and were given space in the same magazines.

Now Soviet opinion not only disapproves of "art for art's sake", it roundly denies its existence, contending that all artistes express a tendency of some kind, even if unconsciously. The Soviet idea is that artistes cannot detach themselves from life which is the source of art, that they should not be amoral or apolitical and that they have a responsibility to the people.

The escapist trend was not of long duration and is attributed in the U.S.S.R. chiefly to the disruption of war. There's the strain of reorganisation, deflecting writers from hard creative work. Reconstruction itself is less easily dramatised than were the dynamic stories of the Revolution which inspired the best Soviet works and which had a clear-cut dramatic conflict inherent in them. The producer Gerasimov, for instance, complains that conflict, and consequently drama, is lacking in recent film scripts. Finally, some writers simply felt that "the time had come" for escapist entertainment.

But the strengthening of the ideological front is probably more significant as long-term policy than as an immediate measure to check the escapist mood. Here are some leading points from an address to the Leningrad writers made by

A. Zhdanov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, points which are re-emphasised practically each time the subject comes under discussion.

First, the influence of literature and the arts on youth: writers such as Akhmatova can only discourage and poison young minds; had the younger generation been brought up in a mood of indifference and cynicism, it could never have been victorious in the war; only because it was brought up in a spirit of self-reliance, good cheer and daring, was it able to pass the test of socialist construction and war; only in this spirit, and if it is well educated, can the present young generation fulfil the task of consolidating and strengthening the Soviet socialist system and create an era of well-being and cultural renaissance.

The effect of cultural activities on reconstruction and the Five Year Plans is another dominant note: the people need ideological ammunition to help them in the effort of reconstruction; and they want quality; it is not sufficiently understood that the nation has matured, that cultural standards have been raised; people want to see the heroism and the problems of the present construction effort reflected in the arts and interpreted more truthfully and searchingly.

Finally there is the international aspect: it is the writers' responsibility to give a bold and comprehensive picture of the new Soviet way of life and to indicate the peoples' aspirations for the future; especially in view of the misrepresentation of those foreign writers who are at the service of capitalist interests, who fear the influence of socialism and Soviet socialism, and who seek to draw an iron curtain over the truth about the U.S.S.R. and the achievements of Soviet culture; it is not for Soviet writers to assume a defensive attitude towards the critics of the Soviet Union.

Stalin has described writers as engineers of the human soul, and the educational power of the arts is still regarded as their most important aspect. While a spell of escapism may be considered a natural thing after a war, it is also only natural that a country, entering upon a new and vital phase of construction, should reaffirm the principles which it believes to have been the foundation of its past achievements.

## MR. EDWARD GODAL

Mr. Edward Godal—Managing Director of Mobile Cinema Services Ltd.—who died suddenly on December 3rd, at the age of 57, will be a great loss to his friends, and to the Company.

He was one of the first pioneers of British Film making. He was a fine producer. He also had an unerring instinct for talent—Madeleine Carrol being one of his discoveries. The early films he made—which will be long remembered—are *The Temptress*—one of the first films in which Yvonne Arnaud played—the *Audacious Square*, in which Jack Buchanan was the star, and the *King of Kings*.

Seeing the possibility of the vast radius of the cinema—he appreciated at an early date the value of the documentary films for training and propaganda purposes. He was keenly interested in the British Empire and went to West Africa to make the film that is still the only one in existence on

Freetown. Finally, a few years before he died, he became a man with a mission.

It was Mr. Godal's ambition to see the film as a medium of education in every school throughout the country, believing that the teaching of many subjects could be greatly assisted by visual aid. Having great experience from the tremendous service he rendered the country by his great organisation of Mobile Cinemas to the Services in the war—carrying entertainment to outlandish places; to the hospitals and ships; to isolated institutions and to evacuated children under the greatest difficulties—he was well able to realise his constructive ideas in peace.

Mr. Godal was a man of high ideals and dynamic energy. He had a cheerful nature and a long vision, with an adaptability which made it possible for him to overcome any obstacles. His hard work to this end doubtless hastened his death.



# REFLECTIONS ON THE JOHNSTON VISIT

by PETER BURNUP

*London Editor of the "Motion Picture Herald"*

REMARKED ONE SHREWD, observant woman after taking calm stock of Eric Johnston's good looks, his manifold charms, those well-cut clothes, that manifest, convincing air of well-being: "There's only one difference between him and a movie star. He's got brains".

That was a characteristic facet of diverse, many-sided comment made during the Motion Picture Association's president's twenty-four day stay here; comments which crystallise facilely into the query: Was Johnston completely in earnest in all that fervent oratorical advocacy of a better understanding between American and British film-makers? The sceptics conceded Johnston's ability, courage, forcefulness; recognised in him a man always prepared to slap down forthrightly on what the Americans call gobbledycock. They remained sceptical. They had heard so often of the esteem in which Americans allegedly now hold British films; of the immense volume of dollars which presently will accrue to this land in the way of film-hire from across the Atlantic. But they had no witness to that latter circumstance.

## EUPHORIA

Yet here was Eric A. Johnston, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, bubbling over with euphoria, eloquently, fervently, claiming that Britain's film production was striding ahead in seven-league boots; that God was in His Heaven and all that sort of thing; that nothing was required of all save just that little, tiny, further piece of common understanding. And wouldn't the world—by which, in the view of the sceptics, he meant Britain—concede him just that thing?

The aforesaid sceptics—they granted unanimously that here was a man, an orator, whose precise like they'd not previously encountered in film-trade circles—grew more dubious. They (some of them at least) felt that Eric Johnston had developed to an hitherto unexperienced degree into that characteristic phenomenon, the Teller of the Tall Tale. He was, so the hypnotising whisper went, the epitome of American Big Business. Not only were Britain's films unpleasantly disturbing to America's Big Businessmen but there's that Quota question hanging around the corner. And that really was why Eric Johnston made his Atlantic voyage . . .

## NEW PRESIDENT?

There are no two words of Mr. Johnston's standing in the realm of American—or, for that matter, International—Big Business. When he got his discharge from the American Marine Corps at the end of World War I—he was then 22—he created and made flourishing three big industrial concerns in his home town of Spokane, Washington. Spokane's citizenry made him president of their Chamber of Commerce. Three years later, his fame having spread across the west lands, the American National Chamber of Commerce took him to its fold. He became president of that organisation

in 1942. He is also a director of such institutions as the Bank of America, the New World Life Insurance Company, United Airlines, the Seattle First National Bank, the Spokane and Eastern Trust Company. In addition, he served—at the instance of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt (and Johnston's no Democrat)—on White House committees like the Inter-American Economic Development Commission, the Economic Stabilisation Board, the War Manpower Commission, the War Mobilisation and Reconversion Board. At the height of the recent war and when understanding with the Soviet was trickier even than now, he made a hazardous trip to Moscow and there, on behalf of the United States Government, fixed up things very nicely with the Kremlin. An impressive record and one, in the opinion of the best informed, which by no means has reached completion. There are pundits in plenty on Capitol Hill who prophesy that Johnston will not for long hold his incumbency at M.P.A. They foresee a deadlock in the political jockeying now beginning for the Republican nomination in the next Presidential election. They say that the party caucus will be compelled, not for the first time, to look outside its numbers for a good Republican who will reap the harvest of the current swing to the Right in America. And that, in which case, it will be a hundred to one on that Eric Johnston will be nominated.

## ONE HELL OF A TANGLE

Not especially for that reason (flattering though it be) but in virtue of the circumstance that Eric Johnston is essentially a man of courage, integrity, high intellect balanced with quick intelligence, does present deponent go on record with the view that the best thing the American motion picture industry ever did for itself—and for its British counterpart—was to prevail upon Johnston to undertake the job of being its BOSS. Johnston, in that regard, has another merit. He knew nothing whatsoever about film-business intricacies when he took over. Thomas Didymus and his brethren here made ingenuous play with that fact. Pity, said someone, he doesn't KNOW about pictures; meaning thereby that it was a pity Mr. Johnston didn't know as much about the clapper-boy's job as did the clapper-boy himself. Which is just reducing the business to the ultimate absurdity.

This business, this art, this craft, whatever you choose to call it, has gotten itself into one hell of a tangle. It's someone's job—or no-one's—to show it how to disentangle itself. It's to Johnston's credit that he's trying to do just that thing and is willing to enlist with anyone who'll either help or lead him.

Within the memory of many of us, motion picture has grown from a cheap-jack booth "attraction" into a complex of intellectual, cultural, social (maybe anti-social) values. There are those who declare that it wasn't a growth at all; that it was and is just an unseemly amorphous development attended by cynical financial chicanery unmatched by all the Bubbles of the South Seas. The crazy speed and





"Notorious," directed by Alfred Hitchcock

R.K.O. Radio

fortuitousness with which Hollywood has mushroomed herself into world film sovereignty may be witness thereto. That's no reason why it should be allowed to continue; for that way—and it's a thought for those who see motion picture as a medium of more than moronic entertainment—the art or the craft or whatever it is will surely perish. Let not the unco' guid and the ultra-earnest jump around and swear that Hollywood has contributed nothing to film's advancement. Hollywood's creative artists and her technicians have made the greatest combined contribution to the "art" and its potentialities. It would be strange if they hadn't. They had all the tools and the advantages. Mr. Goldwyn may be justified in his excited denunciation of Californian fat-cat complacency. (Those are new words for the effervescent Sam.) But at least Hollywood, apart from entertaining the world, has opened the way to the development of an art which breathed its first breath a bare fifty years ago.

That is where Eric A. Johnston comes in.

He may be the world's most accomplished commercial bag-man. It may be that his Association's prime purpose is the opening up of new markets for his country's products. But Johnston knows that new markets mean a free-for-all among the nations. He, of all persons, is aware that if American films break into China's innermost recesses, Britain's films will surely follow. That is, if Britain's films are as good as we all nowadays declare them to be.

Moreover, that notion of his for the establishment of a

World Film Council isn't just the amiable sop of a post-luncheon oratory that ill-disposed persons made it out to be. The very fact that those early American distributors (trading with a film-can in one hand and a financial kosh in the other, with a nice little line in salacious screening up their sleeve) accepted the self-denying ordinances of the so-called Hays Office shows what can be done. UNO, UNESCO, all the other O's, mayn't have travelled very far yet. But they're saving this world from something. Maybe, likewise, a World Film Council will have its merits. Certainly, it will have the virtue of ensuring that the screen doesn't abandon its birthright of culture, instruction and enlightenment.

There's a deal of pre-occupation nowadays—maybe, a measure of it just plain ordinary lip-service—with those cultural responsibilities of cinema. Johnston, uninformed though he be of film production refinements, wants to canalise those pre-occupations, to enter into a sharing co-partnership with whosoever can contribute the merest mite to their development. That's something his World Council could—and would—do; apart altogether from bringing nearer those Free Film Overseas Markets (even in America) which are—as it is claimed—the *sine qua non* of Denham's, not to say Elstree's, survival.

British film producers should welcome Eric A. Johnston as America's Big Boss of the Screen. For his principal dictum is—and he lives up to it—that the Common Man is no Moron. Which may be a strange line of thought in Hollywood, but should be loudly cheered by Michael Powell, Michael Balcon, *et al.*



# MUST WE ALWAYS HAVE DIALOGUE?

## *A Plea for Synchronized Silent Films*

By STUART KEEN

IN PAUL ROTH'S book "Celluloid", published in about 1931, you can find these lines—"If the Producers ask why the public preferred this simply-made film to the newest four-hundred-thousand-pounds extravaganza in colour, I can willingly tell them, because *The White Hell of Pitz Palu* fulfilled some of the elementary duties of the proper cinema which the four-hundred-thousand-pounds extravaganza in colour did not, because it showed mountains and snow and people far from the muck and artificiality of the studios, because the public did not know the actors by name, because for once they were able to forget Elstree and Hollywood ever existed—they forgot the horrors of the star system and of faked scenery. And after many months of bleating speech they were shown again that a film could be clean, healthy, vigorous stuff. *The White Hell of Pitz Palu* was exemplary of good Cinema, as opposed to the falseness of the talking film, and it was received with open arms".

I venture to suggest that to-day, after a lapse of fifteen years, they still apply—in fact I know they do, because during the past two years I have shown the film quoted, with my own synchronized musical score, to widely varying types of audiences—Art and Film Societies, Schools, Youth Clubs, etc.—with always the same result—constant demands for it to be seen again. Reactions from the Youth Clubs, especially, have interested me, because discussion has revealed that this was their very first experience of a feature length silent film. And they admit it to be a refreshing—in fact quite thrilling—experience. Encouraged by this attitude, I have set music to others, including Leni Reifenstahl's ski-ing film *The White Flame*. I remember showing this to 200 children at a Sunday School Party as a substitute for the Talkie *Western*, which failed to arrive. The following year these same children were asked to choose their own programme from a list of "Talkies". They turned the lot down and requested the ski-ing film again.

Yes, yes, you say, this is all very interesting—so what? Well, just this, I appeal to Producers to have the courage to produce occasional Silent Films, not just for specialized and non-theatrical audiences, but as commercial propositions. By "silent" I mean non-dialogue. There must be music, and perhaps sound effects. No one in their right senses would not agree that the old, over-loaded captions are now completely obsolete, and that to return to their use is only a backward step. But I do maintain that captions, used with economy, simply and intelligently phrased, can be most impressive. Educationists, and those concerned with the production of Children's Films realize the need for silent films—Ken Annakin stressed this in his recent valuable contribution to SIGHT AND SOUND, and Mary Field is looking for stories which can be filmed with the minimum use of the spoken word. These are encouraging signs, which I sincerely hope will be carried to further stages.

How can a return to silence in the Cinema be considered a backward step (a view advanced by one Producer I know)

when in fact it is only a reversion to pure cinematic art, an art whose progress was rudely interrupted by the novelty of the sound track in the late twenties, until Cavalcanti, Grierson and the rest of the "realists" made intelligent and imaginative use of it in the field of documentary.

Lack of dialogue leaves more to the imagination—is it a bad thing to stimulate the imagination? Any commercial Manager will agree that some of the biggest money-makers in the past have been the "epics" and large-scale "Westerns"—the "action" films in which dialogue is unimportant.

I should have thought that the "international" appeal of the Silent Film would have kept it alive. If it is our policy to secure a place in foreign markets, why not encourage our Producers to make good, simple, straightforward, non-dialogue films, instead of resorting to clumsy sub-titling and "dubbing".

Or is the art of mime lost to us? It would be stimulating to discover whether there are young present-day Directors capable of telling a story entirely "through the camera" in any sense comparable with Murnau's work in *The Last Laugh*. Michael Powell comes to mind as a possible British Director possessing the "silent film sense", whose *Edge of the World*, now a classic, contained many of the elements essential to the best silent film technique.

I wonder if he would agree with me?

If memory serves me well, I believe *Der Kaiser von Kalifornien* (The Emperor of California), with Luis Trenker, shown at Studio One just before the war, was virtually a silent film with a very good musical score. One remembers being aware at the time that this type of film could be readily appreciated, without adaptation, in any corner of the world. And should not a post-synchronized silent picture be more economical to make?

Another aspect regarding music for these films—our contemporary composers, who at the moment only get opportunity of composing intermittent scores, would be called upon to provide music running the full length of the film, which to say the least of it would be far more satisfying artistically to them.

Quite apart from new productions, would it not be possible, now that the public at large shows some signs of taking a more intelligent interest in the cinema (?) for some of the best and least-dated Silents to be re-issued with synchronized music? Imagine, for instance, Rene Clair's *An Italian Straw Hat* with a subtle musical score (but re-printed so as to run at sound speed without distortion) or, of course, any of the Chaplins—without commentary please (with all due respect to previous revivals).

What I wish to stress above everything is that the Modern Silent Film could be a new thing to the younger generation of cinemagoers, and an oasis in a desert of "sound and fury, signifying nothing" to those who sigh wistfully for the best days of the Silent Cinema.

It is becoming customary to read posters marked "This is a British Picture". Speaking personally, it would be good to read occasionally "This is a Silent Picture".



# BRITISH FILMS OVERSEAS

By

H. H. WOLLENBERG

"YOU CAN FOOL ALL the people some of the time; you can fool some people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time". Abraham Lincoln's famous saying holds good in the sphere of the cinema just as well as in the political field. One is so accustomed to and even tired of that unceasing procession of glaring posters and publicity stunts, announcing the smashing world success, the record shattering box-office sensation here, there and everywhere, which accompanies almost every new film. They have long ago become meaningless, and even the least discerning filmgoer has probably ceased to pay much attention to these outpourings of certain publicity factories.

The fact is that, so far, the possibilities of assessing audience reaction seriously to films on an international scale are very limited. Reliable machinery which would come up to scientific standards is still lacking. Its creation should be made one of the foremost tasks of the United Nations Film Board, which was initiated at the recent UNESCO conference at Paris. For, if the true mission of the cinema is to promote understanding between the nations through the exchange of their films, then this task is of a decisive significance.

This international mission was obviously in the mind of the British Minister of Education, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, when, as President of the recently held British-Czech Film Festival at Prague, she referred to British films as "*the bearers of friendly messages from one great democracy to another*". In fact, in responsible British circles both inside and outside the film industry proper, the conviction holds that the film is the nearest approach to an international language and should be used as such.

## TIMELY AND IMPORTANT

Every week, as you know, about 235 million people are estimated to flock to the cinemas throughout the world. Here and there, and in ever increasing quantities, they have lately had the opportunity to see British films on the programmes. "British films have earned for themselves a fine reputation throughout the world, and I believe that they will help to explain the British people to their friends in other lands". This more general assessment of the appreciation of British films in other countries was made by Mr. Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary, also on the occasion of the Prague Film Festival.

It seems timely and important to go deeper into the facts available on foreign reaction to the British film. However, before entering into an analysis of the factors responsible for that fine reputation of the British film, some more detailed evidence may be put forward.

Different from publicity hand-outs altogether are the reports from responsible journalists about the film situation in the countries they cover. Such a report by its Stockholm correspondent appeared in a recent issue of the responsible Swiss journal "*Schweizer Film Suisse*". Sweden, that small

country with a very high cultural standard, has her own film industry, producing an annual average of 45 films; apart from these, American, Russian, French and British films are shown. Surveying present developments, the correspondent stressed as a conspicuous feature the outstanding success of British films with Swedish audiences. "The British film", he pointed out, "has had an amazing rise in popularity". He mentioned *Henry V's* Stockholm run of several months. Other British films such as *Two Thousand Women* or *Perfect Strangers* were also great successes. "All this", he concluded, "has contributed to the British film becoming an important factor which has to be reckoned with in Sweden". No doubt, this sober observation by a Swedish correspondent in a Swiss journal is illuminating, but it is by no means an isolated instance.

Some time ago I had a letter from Oslo, the capital of Norway. Its Norwegian writer, unknown to me, was prompted to write the following note: "I wonder if you are interested to know that British films have become a great success. The audience begins slowly but surely to prefer English to American films. *Love Story*, *The Seventh Veil* and *Thunder Rock* are at present running to full houses. The entire Oslo press was raving about the Boultings' *Thunder Rock* . . ."

## LATIN AMERICA

A conspicuous success is enjoyed by British films in Czechoslovakia where, ever since her liberation, almost all British films of recent years have been screened. I shall just limit myself to the officially published fact that, for instance, during last August no less than 26 Prague cinemas out of a total of 68 were showing British films, while 15 presented Czech, 4 Russian, 11 American and 11 French films.

Far away from Europe, Latin America, too, provides some illuminating evidence. A correspondent from Buenos Aires, an editor, in a letter dated December 10th, 1946, tells me that British films, during the last year, have enjoyed a great success. *The Seventh Veil* had entered the 25th, *Madonna of the Seven Moons* the 10th week of their first runs, and *The Man in Grey*, just released, is expected to contribute to the singular popularity of the British film. And from Cuba, my Havana correspondent writes that, among others, *The Seventh Veil* and *Madonna of the Seven Moons* had "triumphant" runs in the most prominent cinema "America".

However, of those 235 million weekly cinemagoers mentioned above, no less than approximately 90 million live in the United States of America. The United States are the most formidable market for film entertainment, and therefore the question "how do the Americans react to British films"? is all the more important.

It is known and can be explained by the rise of the U.S. cinema that foreign films have never been able to play any part worth mentioning on the American screen. All efforts



to penetrate the American market have failed in the course of a good many years; American audiences, so we were told, would not accept them. Recently, however, a new trend is becoming more and more apparent.

The "Film Daily", New York, published a summary of replies to a questionnaire sent out to press reviewers and radio film commentators on a nation-wide scale a short while ago. One of the questions was concerned with foreign films. It asked: "The years ahead will see a marked increase in the number of imported pictures. Do you believe that audiences in your city will give them a ready welcome"? Remarkably enough, the majority, viz. 53 per cent., of the replies were in the affirmative, and the journal's editor in his summing up pointed out "that the recent British pictures have served to lessen the former distaste" of foreign production and that "the trend should continue". He added: "factors favouring the foreign product, particularly English pictures, were said to include better stories, sincere acting, improved sound tracks and more publicity for stars".

#### U.S. CRITICS

Apart from the result of the enquiry as such, which is certainly encouraging for the British studios, the individual replies to the questionnaire are well worth closer scrutiny. Here are some characteristic quotations:—

"Audiences here are prone to rate British pictures far above those made in this country" writes Emily R. Jerger of the "Times-Enterprise", Thomasville; and Everett Johannes, of the "Times Star", Alameda, Calif. adds: "If foreign films like *The Baker's Wife*, *Vacation from Marriage*, *On Approval* and *The Seventh Veil* keep coming, Hollywood will suffer. At least the foreign film shows sincerity and originality". (*The Baker's Wife* is the well-known French film, *La Femme du Boulanger*.) From Mobile, Ala., Miss Jeanette Keyser, the critic of the "Press-Register", writes: "I don't believe many Mobilians enjoy foreign pictures. However, the last few British films that have played here have received favourable comment. I think their stories far better than those Hollywood uses, the acting more sincere, and the background music is generally beautiful". Replies radio commentator Annemie Heineman, of the W.S.C.S., Charleston, South Carolina: "I'm a fiend for British movies and my listeners know I'm in favour of them", or Paul Jones, of the Atlanta "Constitution": "*The Seventh Veil* did good business and pictures of this kind will do okeh as British stars are more well known". Don Sheldon, of the W.S.O.C., Charlotte, North Carolina, mentions: "I have recently seen Laurence Olivier in *Henry V* and I consider it to be the finest movie I have ever seen". Lea Bodine Drake, of the "Courier", Evansville, Indiana, points out: "British pictures, when well done, beat ours all hollow. French films, I fear, would be over the heads of Evansville Ind. crowds. The more intelligent people here like English films". And Lester Smith, of the News Bureau, Boston, says: "The pictures of foreign origin already shown in Boston since the end of the war clearly indicate that they will be favourably received. British films in particular, now that they have an American show-window policy, are bound to attract greater attention".

These few quotations from observations made by competent critics not only reveal the general trend, but give some noteworthy indications as to its causes. I purposely

selected them from provincial and not from metropolitan "highbrow" sources. Further material for investigation is presented by the recent popularity poll conducted by the American National Board of Review. The Board of Review's junior section, comprising young filmgoers between the ages of 8 and 18, selected *The Seventh Veil* as the best film of the year made abroad. A typical example of the present standard of British film making, it is most encouraging to see that a film with a serious psychological background has been chosen by young Americans who, until now, seemed to take little interest in this type of film. The adult section of the National Board of Review, in its poll for the best film of the year, chose a British film: *Henry V* was voted the best film both for entertainment and artistic merit and importance. Second and third place in the list are taken by an Italian and an American film respectively, but the fourth place again goes to a British film, Cineguild's *Brief Encounter*. The best male actor chosen by the National Board of Review is Laurence Olivier in *Henry V*. The implications of this poll cannot be overlooked.

Both the opinions of the critics and the results of that audience poll reveal an unequivocal attitude. However, the most revealing and searching interpretation of the development was contributed by a film expert, an American producer of almost unequalled experience, Mr. Samuel Goldwyn. "Why are British films so successful now? people ask me", he said in a recent interview. In answering this question, he gave the following reasons:—

"Most of all, they have stopped trying to imitate us". In other words, British films as a whole have, in Mr. Goldwyn's opinion, found their own specific style. "They have begun to use methods of their own", Goldwyn elaborated his statement.

Hardly less important in Mr. Goldwyn's opinion is the fact that British films "have applied a viewpoint that is broader and more international than ours. Yet, they are closer to the people by reflecting the intimate universality of everyday living". The "broader and more international" approach of British production as compared with Hollywood's may be explained by the psychological and social impact of the recent war. Britain, like the rest of Europe, has gone through historical experiences, menacing the very foundations of her existence, which could not but influence the general outlook, attitude and taste. Hollywood went on working remote from this changing world. By this I do not mean to say that present audiences on the whole wish to see nothing but war or resistance subjects. Providing so-called escapism will always be a function of the cinema. But whatever story is presented, it must have a psychological relation to the world, the reality, the society the people live in. "The intimate universality of everyday living" is indeed what must be reflected in films. The human element, which is common to mankind beyond any national, social or racial differentiations, appears primarily responsible for the positive response to a good many British films in a good many different countries. The interpretation of human relations in a true-to-life manner is that language by which the cinema can make itself understood throughout the world.

This interpretation of Samuel Goldwyn's acute analysis may be enhanced by some interesting information from Switzerland. Switzerland, with her mixed population—three quarters German speaking, the rest French with an



Italian sprinkling—is in itself a sort of cross-section of European tastes, emphasised by the country's traditional, unbiased neutrality. Hardly mentioned in Britain, an international film festival was arranged, some months ago, at Locarno, where an impressive selection of important films, 28 altogether, was shown to a cosmopolitan audience. There was no official jury awarding prizes, but a Swiss journal improvised a poll among 16 critics present, including French, Italian, Swedish and preponderantly Swiss journalists. The 28 features shown included no less than 11 American films, among them *Double Indemnity*, *The Ox-bow Incident*, *Hangover Square*, *Keys of the Kingdom*, *The Song of Bernadette* and René Clair's *And Then There Were None*; other films screened included *Ivan the Terrible* (Russian), *Waiting Room of Death* (Swedish), *Rome an Open City* (Italian), major French, Mexican, Spanish and German productions. This array was contested by two British films, Ealing's *Dead of Night* and the late Leslie Howard's *Pimpernel Smith*. While René Clair's *And Then There Were None* was voted the best film with the best direction, it is significant that both British films were marked by the critics as outstanding in different fields: *Dead of Night* was judged the subject of the greatest interest, and *Pimpernel Smith* the most entertaining film.

One of the most enlightening test grounds of audience reaction to films of different origins is probably Berlin these days, the Reich capital which once was a film centre second only to Hollywood. For Berlin, as you know, is divided into four sectors of occupation. The result is that you are able to see American, British, French and Russian productions in the various sectors and, in addition, selected older German films. Filmgoing is extremely popular and non-German films meet with great interest. In this connection I would again refer to an up-to-date report from Berlin published in a reliable Swiss journal. I prefer quotations from Swiss publications, as any suspicion of preference for one or the other countries of the origin of the films is precluded. Which of all the various foreign productions shown to the Berliners has met with the greatest success? In the opinion of this Swiss report, it was a British film. I am now quoting verbatim: "The greatest success so far was probably the beautiful English film *The Seventh Veil* . . . a film which was kept on the programme for many weeks and subsequently had a long run in the German synchronised version". The spectacular world success of *The Seventh Veil* did, as you see, not even stop at the frontiers of occupied Germany. The report continues: *The Man in Grey*, too, had a long run. Running at present after a gala premiere is *The Wicked Lady*. Earlier in the year 1946, *Brief Encounter* had been chosen for an interesting experiment. "The British", as the Swiss report points out, "presented the interesting film *Brief Encounter* in German and English simultaneously, i.e., it ran in its original English version in one theatre, while at the same time another theatre showed it in a German dubbed version".

In point of fact, probably no British film so far has made such an impression, wherever it was shown, as Cineguild's *Brief Encounter*. The various international festivals, apart from Locarno, are proof. This film has been and is being appreciated as the outstanding example of the finest qualities in British film making. I limit myself to the following quotations from a review published in the *National-Zeitung*, Basle, a Swiss daily of the highest reputation: "The only artistically perfect film was sent by

England, the work of Noel Coward and David Lean. It was hardly advertised. It ran modestly, one film among dozens. But of the thousand spectators, a thousand were deeply moved, for *Brief Encounter* is probably the most beautiful love story ever told on the screen. She: Celia Johnson. He: Trevor Howard. Both superb. In addition, scenario, dialogue, cast, direction, camerawork, sound, cutting—all absolutely perfect". So much for the Swiss paper. Mr. Goldwyn's general remarks are here illustrated by a concrete test case, and it may be added that in Moscow, too, at a gathering of film artistes and technicians, *Brief Encounter* was voted the best achievement of the West.

Another example of the appreciation of the British cinema is supplied by *The Captive Heart*. It made not only a very strong impression at the British-Czech festival at Prague, but a French critic, for instance, writing in the well-known Agence d'Information Cinégraphique, Paris, pointed out that the film had several moments of absolutely supreme quality, and placed it on the same footing with one of the finest films ever made, *La Grande Illusion*.

Of course, within the limits of this article, it was possible only to give rather a summary analysis of foreign opinions on and reactions to the British film. But in their summing up fairly clear conclusions can be drawn. The British film effort appears to be on the way to contribute appreciably to what is the very mission of the cinema at large. As Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, recently defined it: "It is more important than ever that the peoples of the world should get to know each other, that they should understand how their neighbours live, what are their difficulties, their desires and, indeed, what are the fears of the different nations. It becomes of extreme importance that we should use every means at our disposal of giving people that sympathetic, mutual understanding which is the only basis for true and lasting friendship. Literature is one of these vehicles, but even more effective is the film".

---

[Continued from following page]

Mountain snows offer every gradation of light and shadow from dead black to blinding white, and opportunity to the photographer to construct pictures of great beauty. Armand Thirard, who also photographed *Père Noël*, has surpassed himself in *La Symphonie Pastorale*, and as well made the very most of the exquisite Michèle Morgan, and the nervous sculpture of Blanchard's features. Pierre Blanchard plays the young Pastor of a mountain village who, in Andre Gide's story, adopts a half-savage orphan girl, born blind.

I do not recall a better performance by Blanchard, nor have I ever seen essential hypocrisy more subtly portrayed. It is brilliant. Michèle Morgan has never been lovelier, and the subtlety and strength of her performance matches her beauty. Line Noro is perfect as the Pastor's wife; emotional, acute, rigidly controlled. Andrée Clément shows plainly how charm jilted turns to bitter fury. Louvigny, Jean Desailly, Rosine Luguet and the rest of the cast could hardly be improved. The sensual aspect of the story is brilliantly conveyed with light touches. Who better than the French can handle a story of feminine modesty, jealousy, desire; masculine prudery, idealism, desire? The snow-bound scene and Georges Auric's music assist Delannoy to create a most memorable picture.



## FIVE FRENCH FILMS

By

PETER STREULI

THE CINEMA does well enough with an ordinary novel, and is often at its best when telling a story only a few pages long: the director's imagination is less restricted, he has time to concentrate on intimate and significant detail, latitude to construct form and pace in cinema terms. I have just seen a virtually complete copy of *Sous les Toits de Paris* again—been able to admire the perfect shape of every sequence and the perfect rhythm, visual and aural, of the whole film, impossible to appreciate fully in the tattered copies now seen in England. The monstrous novels of Dostoevsky are another matter, but Charles Spaak has done very well with *The Idiot*, and given Georges Lampin a fairly plain story to tell. He still has to cram a pint or two into a vodka glass, and the result is that some of the film is overburdened with dialogue. Though it is good talk, accompanied by excellent acting and photography, it is not the best cinema. When a clear-cut emotional crisis does come the director is away like a race-horse: Rogogine purchasing the Bible with a knife in it, the camera moving from him to Mychkine at his window dreaming over the roof-tops, back to Rogogine carrying Nastasia to his bedroom up the long stairs past the insistent dripping water-bucket, then cutting to the brilliance of Aglaia's betrothal; the exchange of crucifixes between Rogogine and the Prince; the final scene culminating in Prince Mychkine's hurry to Rogogine, the slow walk up the long stairs past the heavy dripping water, the flickering candle, Nastasia dead on the bed—these are pure cinema, excellent. The camera, Thiriet's heavy music, and the cast all work perfectly together. Edwige Feuillère seizes every opportunity as Nastasia, Coëdel as Rogogine does perfectly almost everything most English actors would over-do, and Gérard Phillipe as the Prince is pathetically a stranger to reality.

The small-part characters in *The Idiot* are excellent—Marguerite Moreno in particular is a delight—but in another Dostoevsky story "character" players have the main burden of the acting, and it is a pity that the sort of bad character make-up one does see occasionally in a French film mars one of the best roles in *L'Homme au Chapeau Rond* (Pierre Billon). But this film is Raimu, alas the last of Raimu; Raimu in a part extraordinarily different from almost everything we have seen him play, Raimu as good as he ever was in his finest comic roles. There is an unforgettable scene when his child left alone at night wanders into the courtyard, a maze of balconies, windows, rooftops and railings strange under the moon, and is puzzled by two strange black shapes not usually there: the audience feels with the child a shock of sick, physical horror as she realises that they are the legs of a dead man hanging. Comes Raimu and, to comfort her, jokes about death and only terrifies the child more mortally. This is the key of the character: the totally ineffective person. Threatening, administering, soliciting, revenging, his intentions dissolve in comicality or pathos. The child dies, and he is too drunk

to reach the bed-side in time; even when his victim is helpless in the throes of a heart-attack, he bungles his attempt to murder. The film is a masterpiece of realism, terrifying in its accuracy, a fascinating, beautiful, horrible nightmare. The photography is excellent, the music (Thiriet again) as evocative as the dialogue; an atmosphere is created comparable to the most intense broodings of films like *Citizen Kane*.

*L'Assassinat du Père Noël* is one of the first of the recent cycle of "snow pictures" which the continental cinema has produced, and in some ways one of the best. It has the advantage of a magnificent performance by the late Harry Baur as Cornusse, an old man who makes geographical globes in a little village shop in the mountains. Cornusse is "Father Christmas" every year, and replete with magnificent robe and cotton-wool whiskers he visits every house to learn from the parents what presents their children want—while the children half-concealed under the tablecloth furtively watch the ceremony—including, of course, a little liquid refreshment for Père Noël. At last Cornusse, very fuddled, finds himself in the Baron's castle, and a glass of champagne there finishes his evening. He sleeps. And the Baron puts on his robes. But there is a little sick boy whose heart is set on the great globe which hangs outside Cornusse's shop, and when he does not come, the boy's brothers go out calling for Père Noël in the echoing mountains—and find him, dead in the snow. The mystery is solved, other mysterious and unpleasant happenings in the village are explained, and the film culminates in a magnificent scene: Cornusse, with the village children singing behind him, coming over the snow to bring the lame boy a fine new world. The allegorical significance which the French saw during the occupation in this last scene is now unimportant, and this is merely one, perhaps the best, of many beautiful sequences. Again photography, lighting and acting are first-class. Henri Verdun's music is excellent and very well used, and is an integral part of the atmosphere. Baroncelli's treatment is intensely human and picturesque in the best sense of the word.

The stories of many recent French films tend to deal in the irrational—the inexplicable, the supernatural, the dream, fantasy. But the treatment of the films is still realistic, in that tradition of the French cinema which has distinguished its major works from the idealisations of Hollywood and Shepherd's Bush. If you will take the stories for granted and concentrate on the work of director and photographer, musician and actors, and appreciate their rational approach to their tasks, you will still feast in the continental cinema. Jean-Baptiste, the sorcerer of *Sortilèges*, terrifies the mountain village near his secluded hut, and when he murders a rich traveller lost on the mountain pass in a snowstorm for his gold, and the traveller's black horse runs wild through the countryside, the villagers think it supernatural, call it "The Horse of Death": the camera shows a very real horse and very real people terrified.

The film is a study of the credulous, rather than the ramblings of a credulous person: things that are beautiful are most beautifully presented, and evil, be it brutality or torture by sorcery, be it the work of criminal, or of man seeking justice, is presented with stark realism. There may be a little too much dialogue, but Louis Page's photography is among the best in recent French films.

[Continued on previous page]



# AUDIENCE RESEARCH

By

RACHAEL LOW

NOT SO LONG AGO an Honourable Member expressed himself in Parliament to the effect that "this country was going to develop future citizens with false sets of values, robots and automatons, whom glamour would prevent from facing up to the realities of life". This terrible fate is ascribed to the influence of the film. The discreet, partial and uncorrelated attempts which have in fact been made to gauge the psychological factors of cinema-going are barely suggested by the words "the Influence of the Film"—a cliché whose currency has already outstripped the knowledge which should lie behind it. Audience Research is in danger of becoming one of those pseudo-sociological terms which imply a greater scientific status than they actually possess.

Following the practice of audience investigations in the past the subject divides into three branches—the extent and habits of Attendance at cinemas, the audiences' Preferences and tastes, and Audience Reaction. Most of the investigations which were conducted in Britain before the war—and there were far more than is usually realised—were concerned with that most easily accessible section of the audience, schoolchildren. As might be expected, almost all of these surveys were concerned exclusively or chiefly with the use of the film as an educational medium. Investigations of this type were conducted by local educational authorities all over the country, and demonstrated over and over again the educational effectiveness of the film. They can mainly be classified as reaction studies, but indiscriminately included some rather unsystematic investigation of schoolchildren's attendance and preferences at the commercial cinema. In addition, the British Film Institute's statistics of school projectors (not collected since 1940) were a useful indication of the extent to which educational films were actually used. The only surveys of any size and importance before the war apart from these studies of children were the five questionnaires issued and analysed between 1927 and 1937 by Sydney Bernstein. These were sent to some 3,000 people from various walks of life and dealt with attendance figures and preferences. In June, 1946, the first post-war one was announced. But however interesting they may be, and however useful to Mr. Bernstein as an exhibitor, it seems doubtful whether anything more than a partial and unscientific survey could be carried out by an individual—by anything, in fact, short of an organisation on a national scale, along the lines of Social Survey or the British Institute of Public Opinion.

## REFRESHING

Since the beginning of the war, the few enquiries which have been the sole practical manifestations of the greatly inflated reputation of Audience Research have been more limited in aim. At the same time they have probably been of more value on that account. Cinema attendance at all ages

was the subject of a nation-wide investigation by Wartime Social Survey in 1943, and the Scottish Educational Film Association in 1945 collected attendance figures for children in various parts of Scotland. The more detailed and objective aims of such surveys, combined with the wider populations, more systematic sampling, and more careful framing of questions, gives them greater reliability and a more general application than such investigations as that by the Birkenhead Vigilance Committee in 1931, which, from a population of only some 2,000 children, set out to show nothing less than "the effects of the cinema on children and adolescents".

The Wartime Social Survey report of 1943 is a model of objectivity, accuracy and thoroughness which is rare and refreshing in social research. A sample of 5,639 people, representative of different regions and occupational groups, were asked simply how often they went to the cinema, and the results were classified according to age, sex, and economic and education groups. The results of investigations like these, because they are factual and broadly based, form a safe ground for hypotheses, and supply the much-needed data for sociology—an infant science which suffers at the moment from an abundance of inadequately founded theories. However, the investigation dealt only with the civilian population, and that in the abnormal conditions of wartime. It referred only to the summer months, moreover, and some sort of seasonal comparison would be an obvious improvement. It was carried out for the Ministry of Information, who wished to know how wide a public could be reached by film publicity. In the interests of social science, it will be regrettable if no sponsor can be found to repeat the enquiry in post-war conditions. Other attendance topics, which could probably be dealt with by the more direct method of the questionnaire, if the co-operation of the Federation of Film Societies and the controllers of the children's clubs was secured, are the extent of specialist cinema audiences and children's cinema clubs.

## CAREFUL AND OBJECTIVE

In addition to this work on attendance statistics, a more careful and objective approach to audience reaction has been shown in scattered experiments by film societies and small film units (mainly in connection with documentary or scientific films) and in certain reports by Mass Observation. Whereas preferences and attendance require large-scale surveys, audience reaction is more suited to the small investigation. Detailed questionnaires on single films have been issued to members of audiences which are usually small, and selected by special knowledge or interest in the subject. Such experiments yield valuable clues as to the most successful construction of information films for various types of audiences, and are of more use at this stage



than repeated demonstrations of the educational effectiveness of the film. A newcomer to this field is the research department of G.B.I.'s Children's Film Department, which is to study child reaction to entertainment films.

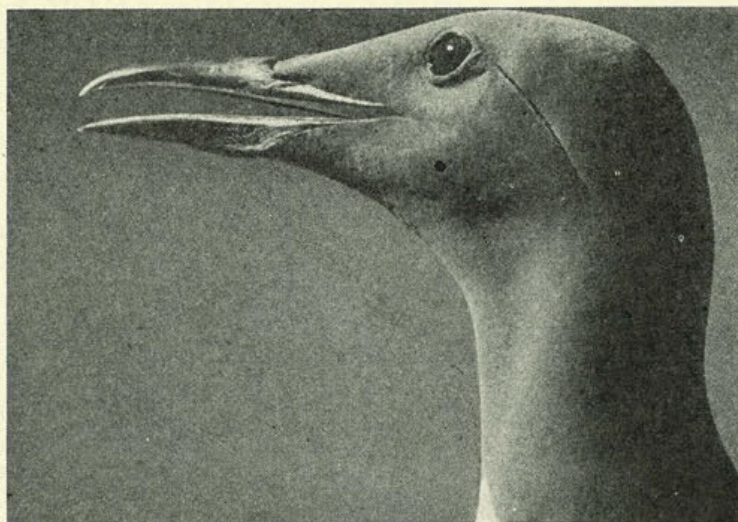
#### DANGEROUS

The technique is fundamentally the same as that used by Mass Observation in their film work, and includes observation of reaction in the cinema itself and questions afterwards. Similar investigations applied to other than information films could and should ultimately be among the most valuable of all audience surveys. This branch of investigation, of less obvious and practical importance than the others, could produce material of enduring historical, psychological and sociological interest. And in their news-reel reports Mass Observation do actually seem to be fulfilling this function. But, although they do not suffer from the pretentious magnitude of the Payne Fund Studies, the methods used by Mass Observation run a greater risk of subjectivity than other more limited—and probably less interesting—surveys. Even if it is admitted that a few hundred interviews form a valid basis for conclusions and surmises as general as those which Mass Observation offers, the value of the reports seem to depend to a dangerous extent on the brilliance—or otherwise—of the interpretation. To give only one example, in 1940 the "Sunday Dispatch" held a competition to determine the most popular film fade-out, and the results were analysed by Mass Observation. 577 people entered the competition, each naming 3 film fade-outs. From these results the following conclusions and "probabilities" were given: that tragic fade-outs are the most popular (someone dying, or "facing the future"); women have a greater preference for the emotional as opposed to the merely uplifting than men; to end a film on a note of complaint (against social wrong, etc.) is not well received; and that "there is no evidence to support the theory that audiences have short memories".

#### CAUTION NEEDED

Quite apart from whether competition entrants form a representative sample on which to base a serious analysis—particularly a competition of so ill-defined a nature—it is quite possible to differ, on the results given, from the conclusions put forward. In particular, when 5 of the 15 most frequently named films were made in 1939—and 3 of the first 4—one may well question the last assertion. Moreover, how trustworthy is such a view when it is flatly contradicted by the results of the "Daily Mail" Award (early 1946)—a competition with exactly the same basis of voluntary entries and a widely-framed question. Results like this should certainly be treated with the greatest caution, and sharply distinguished from interpretations which depend so largely on the intelligence, previous knowledge and prejudice of the interpreter.

These studies explore, among other things, the types of film and film star that people like, and overlaps with the third main branch of Audience Research, that of Preferences. Apart from the incidental treatment in certain of the child



*From a Swedish film shown at the recent Scientific Film Congress in Paris*

studies, the only work in this branch before the war was the Bernstein questionnaires mentioned above. More recent, and more comprehensive in character, is the work of the British Institute of Public Opinion. By normal opinion poll methods they can forecast with a satisfactory degree of accuracy whether such and such a film will be a box-office success, measure the current popularity of certain stars—in fact, they carry out market research. For commercial purposes there is probably room in England for a Want-to-See quotient of the type worked out in U.S.A. by Audience Research, Inc. (a branch of the Gallup organisation, to which the British Institute of Public Opinion is itself affiliated). This information is of undoubted practical interest, but for more scientific purposes it suffers from the disadvantage of all opinion polls—that they measure not what people like, but what they imagine, or claim, that they like. More useful, though much more difficult, would be some attempt to find the composition by age, sex, occupation, marital status, etc., of audiences attracted to various well-marked categories of film—sentimental drama, thriller, musical-spectacle, sophisticated comedy, documentary-narrative. A limiting factor to the accuracy of an enquiry like this would be that the economic group and town-country category would have been decided in advance by the exhibitor's choice of cinema. The point of such an enquiry would be, of course, that it should deal not with opinion, but fact, and to this end would have to be carried out by actual sampling of audiences. However difficult this might be, if done on a large enough scale and with due regard for its limitations, it would yield results incomparably more interesting than anything yet attained in regard to film preferences.

In conclusion, may one confess to a feeling of depression at the prospect of bigger and better schemes for pinpointing majority preferences? Has ever an art been so hampered? However desirable scientific accuracy may be in the interests of sociology, it is to be feared that its enlistment in the cause of commercialism in the cinema can only delay the appearance of higher standards of artistic appreciation.



# THE "ONE ACT" FILM

By

TONY ROSE

CRISIS CONTINUES TO FOLLOW CRISIS, but the Government assures us that there will be no cut in the importation of American films. From the point of view of the Cinema patron who is concerned with entertainment and not politics, this can only be regarded as a "good" thing. For even the most ardent admirer of British films and the most supercilious derider of Hollywood has to admit that we lack facilities for filling our own screens—let alone filling them with first-rate material.

On one count, however, I am disappointed. I had looked forward to the passing of the "B" film or "supporting feature" which (with a few exceptions) is to my patriotic way of thinking aimed at a mental age group almost non-existent in this country. I refer to the seemingly endless series of sagas dealing with the adventures of the East Side Kids, to the success-stories of dance bands with their peculiarly unmoving emotional upheavals. These and many others seldom complained of by the critics, for the simple reason, I suppose, that the critics don't see them, continue to be a regular part of provincial programmes, a decidedly poor advertisement for the American way of life and a source of tedium. They occasionally give place to re-issues of old "A" films and, particularly during the war, documentaries. It is not to make room for these however, desirable as they are, that I hope to see the "B" film fade out. It is for the sake of stimulating the growth of a new species of film which British studios might make their own. For convenience we will call it "the one-act film".

## ESCAPE FROM BATHOS

By this I mean something bearing the same relation to a full-length feature as a one act play does to a three act—secondary in size and scope only; certainly not in quality. (To start out with the intention of making something of secondary quality is depressing in any trade. In a trade which sometimes calls itself an art it is inexcusable.) To make my point clearer; where a "B" film seeks to emulate an "A" a one-act film would seek to establish a tradition of its own. Off hand, I can think of only three examples: *The Tell Tale Heart*, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay* and *Consider Your Verdict*. *The Tell Tale Heart* was a fairly faithful adaptation of the Edgar Allan Poe story with obvious but effective use of the film's capacity to introduce superimposed sounds. It has been revived recently in London and it is odd that, so far as I know, no other short stories have followed it on to the screen. *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay* was somewhat longer and being based on a book of memoirs (or rather selected incidents from the book) was very loose in construction. It did, however, attempt something different and thus escape from the machine-made and bathetic tradition of the "B" film. *Consider Your Verdict*, the only English example, was taken from a one-act play by Laurence Houseman, which had been a success on

the radio. Somewhat amateurish in technique, it showed little evidence of having had any money spent on it, but again marked a brave departure.

## DIRECTORS AVAILABLE

It is hardly necessary to describe the line of progress which these three films indicate. There are endless potentialities in the short story alone. O. Henry's racy dialogue, the taut construction and obvious pictorial quality of Maugham are ready-made and waiting. For the advocates of trick photography there are H. G. Wells, "Tales of the Unexpected". One, "The Man who Could Work Miracles", has already been filmed, though, much to its detriment, it was padded out to feature length.

That we have directors capable of doing good work in the short medium is born out by Ealing Studios' *At Dead of Night*. Six of them contributed to this—in effect—anthology of mystery stories. It is worth noting too, that most critics were of the opinion that the film's weak point was its connecting plot: the ventriloquist and the golfing incidents, for instance, would have probably been more memorable if shown separately. As it was, conflicting moods tended to blur the general impression. Judging from reviews, the newly arrived *Une Femme Disparait* is a similar case.

## EXCITING EXPERIMENT

Still further back, however, than the episodic films (*Tales of Manhattan*, *Un Carnet du Bal* and others) the "fiction short" can find origins not literary but purely cinematic. I refer, of course, to the slapstick comedies—the Chaplin two-reelers, now departed and much mourned, which first brought life and movement to the screen. Based often on a single idea, they used a simple method of construction, similar to that of a child building up a house of bricks, which usually results in good cinema. This method is described by Charles Laughton when he is talking about an early film starring his wife, Elsa Lanchester.<sup>1</sup> H. G. Wells suggested the plot in one short sentence: "Elsa blows a whistle". The repercussions arising from this action made up the various sequences of the film.

Much has been written about the future of the British Cinema. Opportunities have been urged for the small, independent production companies and, to quote a statement in "Tribune"—"the keen and talented young filmmakers in this country . . . bursting for a chance to prove what the past five years have taught them". I, for one, believe that an exciting and inexpensive field for experiment awaits them in the one-act film and I hope they reach it before the East Side Kids reach their dotage.

<sup>1</sup> See "Charles Laughton and I", by Elsa Lanchester.



# CONTINENTAL FILMS OF THE QUARTER

Reviewed by ROGER MANVELL

IT HAS BEEN a singularly full quarter for Continental films. The New London Film Society enabled us to see several French films at the Scala, including Renoir's outstanding *La Règle du Jeu* and Rouquier's beautiful *Farrebique*, the film the French themselves excluded from the Cannes Festival last September and which many leading French directors defended from unfair criticism. In the specialised cinemas we have seen films ranging from *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ozep's technically interesting early German sound film of 1931, the Russian film *The Turning Point*, which earned the first National prize at Cannes, and the two great films *Les Enfants du Paradis* and *Day of Wrath*.

It is difficult to make a point which is common to them all, except how emphatically they demonstrate the outstanding importance of the controlling artist. In all these films the director's personality is decisive: there is no question of box-office, or censorship, or pleasing a star-ridden public. Distinguished actors and actresses appear, but always in the service of the situation the director has prepared for them. Except for *The Turning Point* (which is a brilliant reconstruction in the documentary manner, like *Theirs is the Glory*) all these films belong to the poetic branch of cinema, the evocation of mood and of emotional suggestion which in literature is associated with Proust and Virginia Woolf.

Ozep's film, dated in the acting of the women, who are hampered by appalling clothes, half-period, half shapeless late-twenties, remains undated in anything else. The Karamazov family, the doddering old lecherous father powdering his face before an assignation which ends in his murder (the dead feet in carpet slippers return again and again to the screen to remind us of his undiscovered body), the bull-necked son, played with intense physical power by Fritz Kortner, his life thrown away on the prostitute his father is attempting to buy in marriage, and the epileptic servant, acted with repulsive suggestion by Fritz Rasp, turn what could have been a melodrama of passion and cruelty into a nightmare world of lost souls. Repeatedly Ozep uses the wandering camera which is one of Carl Dreyer's methods, as it was of Pabst in *The Love of Jeanne Ney*, the camera which pries around for details, tracking, panning, tilting, turning, nosing its way from this to that until a face is discovered, or an ikon, or the shadow of a hand creeping up to where the money is hidden behind the sacred image. It is seldom that the camera angled down from the ceiling onto a scene just below, from chandelier level, seems other than an affectation. In this film it is a comment on the littleness of man, whose passions make him ugly and puerile, the victim of cheap, laughing women. It is futile to say how little we have progressed since Ozep, Pabst, Hitchcock, Pudovkin, Clair and Milestone turned their imagination onto the problem of keeping the new device of sound in its place, moderating dialogue to the service of the picture, using music to invigorate not to cloy the emotions

of the film, as in the thrilling bell and drum music which accompanies the vigorous cutting of the images when a three-horse trap dashes through the woods over muddy tracks in *The Brothers Karamazov*. There was this brief period of change-over from silence to sound when imagination ruled; then the talkies took over with words dominating the pictures, and imagination was lost.

## THE LOSS OF RAIMU

*La Règle du Jeu* of Renoir is a film set in a unique style of satire against the French ruling-class and their servants. It leads in on the lightest level, almost like the early work of Clair, and the main part of the film is devoted to a portrait of a house-party on a country estate which achieves a nice balance between absurdity and seriousness. The famous sequence of the shoot is already regarded as a classic example in French cinema of creative editing, the movement forward of the beaters among the gorse and trees, the climax of the shooting itself bringing its own acid comment on those who kill. And then in the midst of all the absurdity, the charades, the affaires, the jealous chauffeur who fears the fidelity of his lady's-maid wife, the chases through the spacious rooms and dark grounds, comes the resolution, the *crime passionnel*, the final comment of death itself.

*Farrebique* is documentary in the sense that Flaherty's *Man of Aran* is documentary, the result of close observation and understanding by the director of a small group of people, a farming family of southern French peasants, whose dialect has to be titled on the screen even for French audiences. It is a study based on the seasonal work of the farm and the character of the farmers and their womenfolk. It involves human birth, love, marriage and death as evenly as the routine of the crops themselves. It dwells equally on the kneading of bread and the family at prayers. It shows details of courtship and funerals. Only in one technical device does it alter nature, and that is in the hastening process of the passage of light over landscape, where quick-motion is continually used to gain a rolling play of shadows along hills and slopes. The device is pretty rather than effective in a film emphasising the solidity, even the dourness of the peasant character in its devotion to the traditions of family and farm life, and in its remoteness from the aggravations of living in the modern urban world. *Farrebique* is a treasury of portraits, a harvest of nature and landscape, a film conceived by the poetic eye.

The reissue of *La Femme du Boulanger* was an apt reminder of the loss that Raimu's death has caused to the French cinema, which during the thirties came to depend for its quality on the finer points of interplay between actor and director. The humanism of the best French films needed first of all the careful choice of subject and situation and second the realisation of the values of character which could be extracted from them: then it needed artistes whose



personal qualities equalled the demands made upon them by the director. The result was the series of films in which critics were hard put to decide who contributed most, director or actor, to the cumulative effectiveness of works such as *La Grande Illusion*, *La Femme du Boulanger* and *Le Jour se lève*. The devotion of the British to the French cinema is in part based on devotion to the humanism of character-acting to be found in the work of such men as Raimu and Harry Baur. Both are gone now: even the rich acting tradition of the French will have to look far to replace those heavy expressive bodies, those mobile character-anatomising faces.

## TWO COMEDIES

*La Cage aux Rossignols* gives us the chance in Britain to see the work of an actor little known here, Noël-Noël. Once more it is a case of humanism: Noël-Noël is a comedian, possibly a sentimentalist, but in the first place he believes in the generosity of human emotion. He wrote the script of the film himself, and plays in it, under the direction of Jean Dreville, the part of a lonely schoolmaster who is dismissed from his work in a Reform School where he gains the affection of the boys through teaching them to sing with a nice touch of humour and understanding. The sadistic Headmaster is against him from the start. However, the written story of his work in the school becomes a best-selling novel, and this success rescues him from destitution. The film is touching and romantic and yet somehow exact. The Reform School is a genuine building of its kind and the streets of Paris are real and sunlit. Noël-Noël has the face of a man of sympathy, yet it is a comedian's face, plastic and marked with the lines of victimisation by the injustices of the world. Another comedy, *Le Bois Sacré* (directed by Leon Mathot) belongs to a different tradition: it has no sentiment, it is classically neat in structure and satiric in its attack on the human shortcomings of those whose success in the world has puffed them with vanity and taught them petty duplicity. A minor woman poet, treated with ardour by women's clubs, sets out to seduce the Minister of Fine Arts, an artful old man where women writers are concerned, so that she shall get a national prize of honour for her poems. She urges her small and faithful husband, a dentist, to seduce the Minister's wife, and unfortunately he almost does. The situations play in and out of each other with remarkably sharp humour, but the film is a dialogue picture, uninteresting except for the type-characters and the refreshing wit.

Turning away from French films for the moment, the two Russian pictures *Innocent though Guilty* (director G. Levkoyev) and *The Turning Point* (directed by F. Ermler) are in marked contrast. The first is a period film adapted from a play by Ostrovsky about a famous veteran actress who finds her lost son among the supporting players in a small town where she comes on tour. It is beautifully played, the costumes and settings are convincingly worn and have a wonderful sense of period. *Innocent though Guilty* is an outstanding example of Russian screen adaptation from their nineteenth century classical dramas. *The Turning Point*, though fictional in its characters and locale is in effect the documentary reconstruction of the defence of Stalingrad, the turning-point in Russian military fortunes. There is not a character in whose existence one

cannot believe as one believes in the existence of the people next door, but only the Commander-in-Chief becomes a developed character after the more intimate manner of fiction. His strength and his anxiety are well and even movingly conveyed. *The Turning Point* is a favourable example of the realism which the Russians regard as a primary factor in art.

## DISTINGUISHED CINEMA

*Day of Wrath*, Carl Dreyer's great film, the result of a patient calculation and consummate artistry which never intrude upon but always emphasise the inner emotions of the small group of his characters, is the most distinguished piece of cinema to appear on our screen since the War. Carl Dreyer's two masterpieces *The Passion of Joan of Arc* and *Day of Wrath* are separated in production by fifteen years, yet they are linked in theme and style. *The Passion of Joan of Arc* was one of the rarer films of the late silent period, anticipating in its camera-technique and characterisation the period of sound which was just being born. *Day of Wrath* dispenses with all adventitious aids, such as background music. In an interview with the writer, Dreyer said he was looking ahead in this film to the day when the technique of the sound film would be so assured that complete simplicity of treatment would be sufficient to enable the director to achieve the revelation of character, the emotions being so strong that they do not require the support of background music to give them stamina. *Day of Wrath* uses little elaboration of set design, yet all is perfect and in keeping, the old woman's hut, the Rembrandt-like backgrounds in the Pastor's house, the vaults of the Church. The costumes, tailored in black and set off by stiff white ruffs, are as severe as the religious principles of the period. The actors and actresses were chosen with the greatest care, for the face in the cinema, Dreyer maintains, is the window to the soul. No artiste uses make-up: the structure of his face and the nature of his temperament are prime reasons for Dreyer's choice of an actor to portray a character. No one can forget Mlle. Falconetti's face in which lay the heart of Dreyer's earlier film. In *Day of Wrath* the spiritual wrestling of conscience lies in the ascetic features of Pastor Absolon; amorous pride in those of his wife in love with her step-son. Dreyer's camera moves relentlessly over the scene, his microphone recording the rich though sparse and essential dialogue, rich because it enables the actors to weigh it with significance and meaning, to merge it with the emotions expressed by their faces. Though this film deals with a grim theme of the fear of witchcraft in 17th century Denmark and no detail of the torture of the old witch seems to be omitted, there is no scene, no shot in which an act of torture is photographed: all is done by sounds and cries, and the final act of burning is achieved by one terrible shot in which the old woman falls forward from a height bound on a stretcher, and this alone, by skilful cutting, contains all the terror of actual burning. *Day of Wrath* is another milestone in the cinema's slow passage to maturity of artistic expression: where most are still apprentices, Dreyer is a master of the art of the film.

*Les Enfants du Paradis*, Marcel Carné's panorama of French theatrical life in the early eighteenth-century has already been reviewed at length in SIGHT AND SOUND, SUMMER, 1946.



# BRITISH FILMS OF THE QUARTER

Reviewed by ARTHUR VESSELO

AFTER THE 1914 WAR, British films began a long period of complete stagnation, from which they issued again with the utmost difficulty. This last war has seen an opposite phenomenon. It has seen the heavy settling-down of American films in general into a series of ruts, or what look uncommonly like ruts; and the emergence of British films (and home-grown stars) to a position where they are actually beginning to command more allegiance in their own country than their ubiquitous American competitors. Some of this may be due to the mass of capital that has been pouring in, and to the growth of the big publicity-minded monopoly concern; but some at least, one likes to feel, is due simply to a new appreciation of the opportunities, to a new, confident understanding of what we can do if we really try. After all, we have been rehearsing the show for long enough: it is about time for the performance.

One or two of the British feature-films of the past quarter bear out the promise with splendid success; one or two others are not quite so definite; and there are others of which perhaps the less said the better. There is also one in particular which can provide philosophers of the cinema and society with an occasion for as much argument as they wish—Wilcox's *Piccadilly Incident*, third-rate by any reasonable critical standards, but so shrewdly manoeuvred a showman's piece that it is said to have topped the bill for box-office receipts.

There are five films which seem worthy of discussion. Among them without question is *Theirs is the Glory*, the reconstructed film of the First Airborne Division's struggle against superior odds at Arnhem, with the remnants of the Airborne men playing out their own rôles. In direction, production, and acting this film has a restraint and realism of the most admirable kind. There is no overstatement: indeed, there is no need for it, for the events speak clearly enough for themselves; and the result is an essay in heroism, but without heroics.

It is a harrowing film, and one that leaves a lasting memory behind—a memory of the blood, the fury, the bravery and the wastefulness of battle.

*Theirs is the Glory* is an example of fiction outridden by fact. *The Overlanders* is an example of something different—of fictional method and factual background combined (if with some minor flaws) into a sweeping unity. It is at the same time the first British story-film to bring to the screen a thoroughly authentic representation of life in Australia. That the obvious wealth of film-material in Australia and the other Dominions has been so little utilized by our cameras is one of the major mysteries of the cinema. It is not as if the Americans had not shown us the way a hundred times with their Western epics and such-like; nor is it that the immense screen-potentialities of these regions had not been noted: it would seem to be simply another case of the rather scared inertia that characterizes big film-business, which so frequently prefers to go round and round like a toy train on a track rather than go off on to new ground, however near and however inviting.

## AUSTRALIAN MASTERPIECE

*The Overlanders* not only takes the tip from the Americans, but beats them to it; for whereas the typical Western epic is a period piece, *The Overlanders* is as up-to-date as the last war, and does not even depend upon that too emphatically. The central idea is properly simple and expansive—of the overlanding of a great herd of cattle, through two thousand miles of desolate country, away from the menace of invasion. In the working-out, there is very little hint of borrowing from an alien atmosphere, whether American or English. Here, we feel, is the genuine Australian scene, the Australian mode of behaviour, the Australian lingo, the last-named not merely a cockneyized English but a form of speech on its own, with its own kind of idiom and its own music.

While Harry Watt's direction is engaged with men and predominantly masculine aspects, and with animals and the perils of the trek, he is assured and convincing; but when he turns full-face to the women, or gets altogether off the road to romantic dalliance, he becomes uncertain and trivial, and appears now and then to lose all his sense of timing, otherwise so accurate. Partly, there is no doubt, the failing is due to an uneasy awareness of the superfluity of sentimental digressions in such a context; partly also, one must suppose, it is due to an inhibition natural enough in a documentary-maker, coached for so long in other conceptions. At any rate, it is a failing that can be winked at in these magnificent surroundings; and it can probably be diminished and overcome in the future.

No similar uncertainties or inhibitions are visible in Peter Ustinov's work in *School for Secrets*. Feminine aberrations, moving sentiment, and kindred elements are fitted by him freely and neatly into their places in his fictionalized account of the development of Radar in Britain during war-time, and he never obviously makes a false step. Is it, however, hypercritical to suggest that his very adeptness carries with it a trifle of danger, a risk of hardly-observed superficiality? On the face of it, there is nothing wrong with this film. It has everything you want—comedy, tragedy, romance, excitement, dexterous handling of cast and plot, and the impress of direct contact with important historical events. It is only that, on reflection, one feels just a little that profundity may occasionally have been sacrificed for slickness.

*School for Secrets* has both solid content and clever execution. It may therefore seem exaggerated to ask for more. But there is something more that is worth having, and that is depth of feeling, a quality whose attainment may set traps for the seeker—traps of ponderousness and over-effort—but whose virtue is great and undeniable. This is intended only as the very gentlest of remonstrances, but it may be worth the making.

In *A Matter of Life and Death* we are off on quite a different tack. No documentary issues are here involved. We pay our passage for a trip on the good ship *Fantasy*,



steering a zig-zag course between this world's shore and the next. There are some pretty tricks of technique: the alternation between this world in Technicolor and the next in a pinkish monochrome is very nicely managed; but, strictly between ourselves, the Pressburger-Powell home for departed souls is more like a chilly limbo than Paradise.

Frankly, the whole approach is much too timorous. Instead of saying to us flatly, "Here is Heaven, my hearties: take it or leave it", the makers hedge elaborately, pointing out that we are at full liberty to regard the affair, if we so prefer, as a mere hallucination; and the same excess of caution, or circumscription of the imagination, or whatever it is, creeps into the actual portrayal. Heaven, on this reading, is vast, mechanized, static, and ugly—a sort of modernistic nightmare; and even if nightmare is all that it is supposed to be, it could with profit have been made a trifle less material and forbidding.

The idea of the injured airman hovering between two spheres of existence, fought for by both, and saved eventually for this one only after a tremendous display of cosmic dialectic, was first-rate, but it called for a sensitive, imaginative development, of which, except for a few scattered flashes, the film falls a long way short. As a consequence, this is a respectable piece of entertainment, but no more.

Lastly, *Appointment with Crime* brings up the rear. This is a totally unpretentious film about crooks and low life in London. It cannot have cost much to make, and it was brought to birth with no blare of trumpets. No suffocating women, compressed by battling multitudes, are reported to have swooned at its premiere. Indeed, it is no world-shaker; but, for all that, it is on the side of grace. It is down-to-earth, and its atmosphere, if not elevating in the extreme, is at least local and not imported.

## THE NEW ZEALANDER GOES TO THE CINEMA

*Book review by* M. E. COHEN

AS REGARDS THE CINEMA, New Zealand is rather a special case. It is a young, sparsely populated country, remote geographically, rarely visited, therefore, by travelling theatrical companies and largely dependent on films for its entertainment. It is not up to the present, to all intents and purposes, film producing, but, at the same time, it is a nation of film enthusiasts, the number of its cinemas being, apparently, greater in proportion per head of the population than that of the United States. It has no tariff barriers on films, although there is some internal quota arrangement, and they may be imported by anyone who can buy a film exchange licence. Thus, with a very rare continental exception, the film producing companies of the United States and, to a much lesser extent, Great Britain can pretty well have their way with New Zealand. The New Zealander, says Mr. Mirams in his recently published book,\* is unsophisticated, favours the conventional in his entertainment and fights shy of the experimental, which, therefore, stands little chance commercially. In New Zealand "the current movies provide a discussion next in popularity to the weather . . . but it is usually a rather vague and emotional reaction", and in 1945, when Mr. Miram's book was written, there had been little genuine professional film criticism to improve this state of affairs. According to Mr. Mirams, the press up to that time, with one exception, merely published "puff pars" with an eye to the advertising columns and, for various reasons, criticism was unknown on the New Zealand radio. Again, therefore, it appears that circumstances have conspired to give Hollywood a free hand.

Mr. Mirams, although many of his opinions could be applied generally, deals primarily with the position of the cinema in New Zealand, and this makes interesting reading. He is most thorough and there is almost no side of the subject of cinemas upon which he does not touch. Moreover

the book is well illustrated with stills to illustrate various points. Reactions to and influences of Hollywood and its accompanying publicity and side-issues are evidently much the same as those in the United States, but owing to New Zealand's isolated position and resultant provincial outlook, perhaps more emphasised. "The cinema in general", says Mr. Mirams, "caters for a public with the average of age of about 14", and the public accepts what it is given. As regards popular taste in films, his thesis is: which came first—the chicken or the egg? He considers that Hollywood gives the public too little credit for discernment. He believes that there is a strong case for subsidising by the State or the municipalities, or both, films which are doubtful box-office but of obvious cultural worth, and, taking it further, suggests at one point that some organisation should be set up to ensure that State control of material things should not mean state control of the mind as well.

In Mr. Miram's final chapter, he says, "Nearly everything that has been written about films and the film industry in this book has been critical in tone. A reader might perhaps be excused for thinking that film critics in general, and the author in particular, are a cantankerous and jaundiced tribe . . . On the contrary, however, I would suggest that the almost pitiful eagerness with which the average critic pounces on a good film . . . is proof of how desperately anxious the poor fellow is that the public should think well of his beloved cinema . . . I am not now turning into an apologist for the cinema, nor am I watering down any of the general criticisms I have expressed throughout the book". Some of his opinions are far-fetched (those on Jews in the industry, for instance, seem too much of a generalisation). However, he is usually able to support his arguments with authoritative evidence and, although his attitude is certainly controversial, it is intentionally so, and all to the good if it causes an improvement in the quality of film appreciation and in the influence of the cinema as a cultural and social force.

\* Speaking Candidly: Films and People in New Zealand, by Gordon Mirams. (Hamilton, Paul's Book Arcade, 1945, 13/6).



# BALANCE AND CONTROL

By

J. R. COTTRILL, *Film Secretary,*

*Leicester Film Society*

The Leicester Film Society, in conjunction with Vaughan College, Leicester (in whose hall it holds its meetings by courtesy of the Director, Professor A. J. Allaway, M.A.), has recently installed some equipment for sound reproduction which includes a number of new features perhaps not found elsewhere. The sound apparatus installed in 1932 was extremely primitive and had to be discarded in 1944, after which a year was spent trying several experimental layouts, and as a result it was decided that when new equipment was put in a control point would be set up in the hall itself so that the volume and quality of the sound should at all times during the performances be controlled by one of the Society's officers. In addition, and because the hall is used for musical lectures and plays and various other functions, it was decided to include a specially portable gramophone turntable unit and a microphone and several

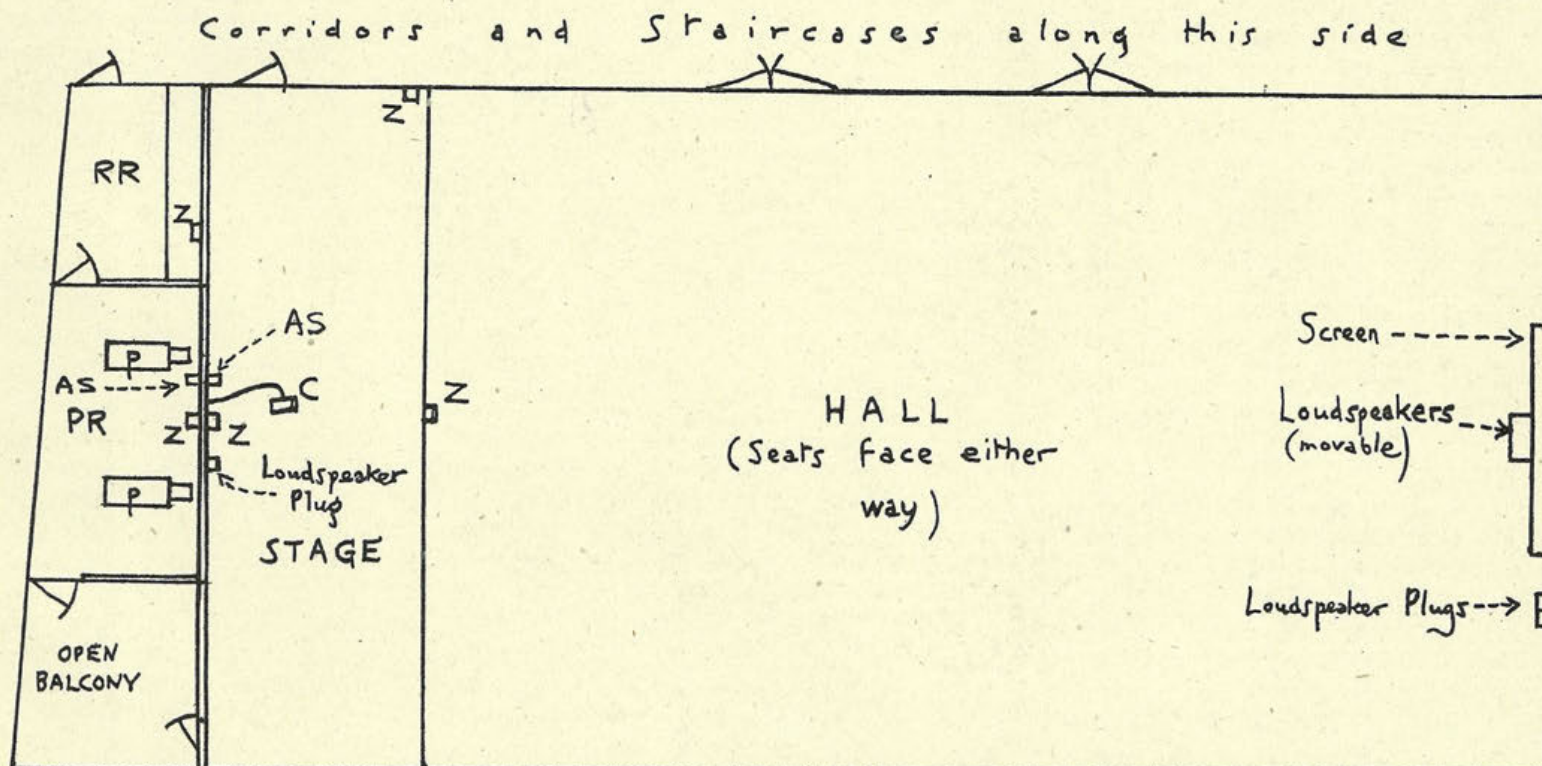
conveniently-placed panels for plugging them in; the volume and control unit governs all the apparatus.

The way in which these arrangements have been made is this. The amplifier is housed in a steel case 23-in. x 13-in. x 11½-in. and is fixed in the projection room on the wall separating it from the back of the hall, and from this amplifier emerge two special control leads (coaxial cables) which terminate in two special screened plugs on a panel in the projector room; these are permanently connected to plugs on flexible leads on the other side of the wall, at the back of the hall. The control unit is a box with three knobs shaped so that their position on their dials can be determined by touch; the left hand knob controls volume, the centre lifts or cuts the bass and the right hand one acts similarly on the upper register. This unit by means of its flexible leads can be placed on a table beside the

armchair in which the controller sits and as he listens to the performance he can adjust the volume and quality to a nicety: he can, of course, act as a human "contrast-expansion" stage.

On a panel in the projection room and on a similar panel by the controller at the back of the hall are duplicate switches for switching the amplifier on and duplicate pilot lights for showing that it is on. There are also two 240v. three-pin plugs, a microphone plug, a gramophone pick-up plug, and a loudspeaker plug. The gramophone unit is like a suitcase and can be closed and conveniently carried about; during performances it stands on a low table by the controller, and the microphone stands beside him also. Gramophone can be used simultaneously with microphone or with film, but when microphone and film are wanted together the former is plugged into a standby amplifier which is connected by independent lines to an independent loudspeaker. Gramophone, film and microphone have independent volume-controls, but the main tone-controls apply to all of them. It is thus possible when giving a lecture to comment on the film and to add or subtract music as desired, and when a straight performance of records or films is being given, to compensate reasonably well for deficiencies of recording, which are much commoner than is supposed.

At times when no controller is at work, the portable control unit is taken into the projection room, plugged in, and left with the controls central; the gramophone unit is also taken in there, or into the rewinding room where additional pick-up and microphone points have been laid on. The



PR = Projection Room  
RR = Rewinding Room  
p, p = Projectors

Z, Z, etc. = Panels with 240 volt  
and Pick-up plug  
and Microphone plug

C = Balance and Control Unit  
AS = 2-way Amplifier and Pilot Lights



operators can then do the entire programme according to normal practice. Additional pick-up and microphone points have been put in (1) at the side of the stage, for use in plays, and (2) at the front of the stage for use when music lectures are being given; the loudspeaker may be connected at either end of the hall as may be requisite. While the wiring was being put in we added an eight-way line from the control point to the projection room and this will in due course be arranged to give visual signals to the operator as to when to start and stop or to carry out focussing adjustments and so on: such facilities are valuable in lecture work as well as in Film Society performances. Since the hearing conditions at the back of the hall are different from those at the front, another line will be used to an auxiliary listening post further forward.

The apparatus was built and installed by Parmeko Ltd., of Leicester, the general plan having been devised by the writer, who will be glad to assist anyone with a similar problem to solve. The set-up has been well tested and is giving promising results. In addition to the particulars of the apparatus mentioned in a preceding paragraph it should be mentioned that the amplifier has an overall gain of 85 decibels on microphone and photo-cell circuits and 45 decibels on gramophone and radio (it is adaptable for relaying material picked up from broadcasts). The maximum gain is distributed over five stages, one being for tone-control; the output is 30 watts (quite adequate for a hall seating 250 people) and the makers claim no more than 3 per cent. harmonic distortion and a response from 50 to 12,000 cycles per second within  $\pm 2$

decibels. These figures have not been checked, but the aural results on a set of constant frequency records are encouraging. The loudspeaker contains high and low frequency units combined into one, with a cross-over frequency of about 1,200 cycles per second; its low-frequency cut-off is below 60 cycles and its high-frequency cut-off is claimed to be above the limit of audibility. Its horizontal distribution angle is about 60 degrees, and there is no marked axial concentration of the upper frequencies.

One may conclude by saying that with really first-class sound and brilliant and rock-steady projection (which we hope soon to attain) it is quite astonishing how much more interesting the duller film becomes. Film Society officials should note this well.

## NEW FILM BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

### *Reviews in Brief*

**Monopoly**, by Ralph Bond. (Association of Cine Technicians, 1946. 6d.).

In this pamphlet Mr. Bond maintains that the British Film Industry is virtually a monopoly and he mentions various suggestions which have been made to counteract this.

**America at the Movies**, by Margaret Farrand Thorp. (Faber, 1946. 12s. 6d.).

This book was originally published in America in 1939. The present editors (H. J. Beale and A. P. Mayer) believe that Miss Thorp gives the best survey of the effects of films in American society that has yet appeared and, apart from eliminating some Americanisms, have only added a few notes.

**Movie Lot to Beachhead: The Motion Picture Goes to War and Prepares For The Future**, by the Editors of Look. (New York, Doubleday, Doran, 1945. 3 dollars 50 cents).

This is an account of how the American film went to war. It shows the various and new uses to which films can be put and their future possibilities in the post-war world. The letter press of each section is followed by a large number of well-reproduced stills, which have a bearing on that particular section.

**Hollywood Quarterly**. (University of California Press. 4 dollars annually. English agents: Cambridge University Press).

In the first number of this periodical, which appeared in October, 1945, the editors say: "What part will the motion picture and radio . . . play in the consolidation of the victory, in the creation of new patterns of world culture and understanding? . . . The purpose of the magazine will be to seek an answer by presenting the record of research and exploration in motion pictures and radio in order to provide a basis for evaluation of economic,

social, æsthetic, educational and technological trends".

**Penguin Film Review**, edited by R. K. Neilson Baxter, Roger Manvell and H. H. Wollenberg. I. (Penguin Books, 1946. 1s.).

This review contains articles on most subjects connected with the cinema, written by such well-known authorities as Anthony Asquith, Michael Balcon and Nicole Vedres.

**Catalogue of Films of General Scientific Interest Available in Great Britain**, compiled by the Scientific Film Association. (Aslib, 1946. 5s.).

This catalogue contains a most useful, exhaustive and up-to-date list of films, arranged alphabetically, together with a classified subject index.

**Film**, by Roger Manvell. (Penguin Books, 1946. 1s.).

The original edition of this book was planned in 1942, written in 1943, published in 1944. It is reissued now in 1946 with the following chief additions to the text: a new introductory survey, a revised chapter on documentary and fiction, a new chapter on the British feature film, a new chapter on the economic aspect of the film industry, a new chapter on the cinema in France, a new chapter on film industries elsewhere, a new and greatly enlarged list of directors and some of their chief films and a hundred new illustrations replacing half the original stills.

**Yeomen in Celluloid**, by B. N. Bessunger. (Sampson Low, 1946. 7s. 6d.).

A novel which describes, in very light vein, the reactions of villagers when it is proposed to make a film in their midst.

**Junior Film Annual, 1946-47**, edited by Eric Gillett (B.B.C. film critic). (Sampson Low, 1946. 12s. 6d.).

This is the first number and the first of its kind and we follow the lead of Uncle

Mac when we wish it many happy returns of the day. It contains the stories and pictures of twenty-two recent films, ten made in Great Britain, several of which are documentary, seven in U.S.A., two in Russia and one each in Australia, Switzerland and France. The book is nicely produced with large, easily-read type, pleasant headings and well-reproduced stills, the colour of those in colour being less crude than is usually the case. The stories are told in straightforward, simple language.

**Good Films: How to Appreciate Them**, by Jympson Harman. (Young Britain Educational Series). (Daily Mail, 1946. 1s. 6d.).

A succinct survey, well illustrated with photographs and stills from well-known films and told in simple language suitable for the young, of the origin and history of the films and how they are made, in a pamphlet of 32 pages.

**Appraisal of Scientific Films**

An interesting pamphlet on "The Classification, Appraisal and Grading of Scientific Films" has been issued by the Scientific Film Association (34, Soho Square, London, W.1, 2s. 6d.). Although the pamphlet has been drafted with particular reference to scientific films for adult audiences, the method advocated could easily be used for educational films of all types. The highly complicated form in which the final findings for each film are tabulated seems, however, hardly necessary.

**Facts About Films**, by Donald Alexander. Current Affairs, No. 15, November 2nd, 1946. (Bureau of Current Affairs).

The object of the pamphlet is to provide some factual material required in any informed discussion on the cinema. It contains a concise survey of the fifty years of film; the British film industry and the prospects for the future.



**Fifty Years at the Pictures**, by C. A. Oakley. (Glasgow, Scottish Film Council of the British Film Institute).

A succinct little survey in 16 pages from the point of view of Scotland, illustrated by eight stills and a number of drawings.

**Le Film Tchecoslovaque**, compiled by Dr. Jan Wenig, translated by Amber. (Prague, Edition Cinematographique tchecoslovaque).

This pamphlet was brought out for the International Film Festival at Cannes. It contains an account of the two Czech films shown at Cannes, a survey of the history of the film in Czechoslovakia, an account of the Czechoslovakian Film Institute, and other articles which deal with most sides of the cinema in Czechoslovakia.

**Anthologie Du Cinema**, edited by Marcel Lapierre. (La Nouvelle Edition, 213 bis, Boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris VIIe).

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the commercial cinema the Bibliothèque du Cinéma has brought out a most interesting collection of some sixty articles, interviews and extracts from other works, by or about outstanding figures who have made some contribution to the development of the film. Ranging from Harold Lloyd to Louis Jouvet, from Eisenstein to Pola Negri, it is designed to form a survey of film art. It is unfortunate that Britain is only represented by one short extract by Cavalcanti on "le mouvement néo-réaliste en Angleterre", but this is presumably not the fault of the editor.

**Books on the Film Als Ware**, by Peter Bächlin. (Basel, Burg-Verlag, 1945. Fr. 12).

The first part of the book consists of a survey of the film from the beginnings of the travelling cinema to the film trusts of to-day. The second part contains a critical analysis of the historical data. It deals with one of the film's most serious problems: an invention which could become a medium for cultural advancement and for general education is now a commercial commodity. Herr Bächlin gives such point to his work that it becomes, in addition to a treatise on national economy, a most interesting contribution to the history of culture.

**Cinema d'Aujourd'Hui**. Congres International du Cinema à Bale. Cahiers de Traits, 10. (Geneva, Trois Collines, 1945).

It seems that, owing to lack of funds, independent film enthusiasts can make no headway in film production without conforming to the commercial tyranny enforced by the film industry. In the face of this problem it has become necessary to develop a film sense in the cinema-going public. That is the object of this book, which comprises twenty-eight lectures by authorities of many nationalities, delivered at the Congres International du Cinema, held in Bale from 30th August to 8th September, 1945.

**Die Urheberrechtliche Wiedergabe. Insbesondere Mittels Film Und Schallplatte**, by Th. Kern. (Zürich, Schulthess, 1945).

This deals with the question of copyright, with special reference to films and gramophone records.

**Die Gewerbesozialen Funktionen Des Filmwirtschaftlichen Interessenvertrages (Schutzvertrag)**, (The Effects of the Treaty protecting the Film Industry on the Social Aspects of the Trade), by Th. Kern, **Ein Eidgenössisches Filmgesetz?**, (A Federal Law for Films?), by Th. Kern, **Die Gestaltung Des Tons im Dokumentarfilm**, (The Development of Sound in the Documentary Film), by Dr. Adolf Forter, **Grundsätze Des Bundesrates Zur Staatlichen Filmpolitik**, (The Federal Council's Principles of State Film Policy), by R. Marchetti, **Jugendschutz Und Kino**, (The Cinema and the Protection of Youth), by Dr. Th. Kern, **Quellen Des Schweizerischen Film-Rechts**, (Origin of the Swiss Film Law), by Dr. Th. Kern, are all reprints from the Schweizer Film Suisse during 1944 and 1945, and published by Schweiz. Lichtspieltheater-Verband in Zürich.

**Scannan**, monthly review of the Portlaoighise Film Society, now appears in printed form. The last issue received before going to press (November, 1946) contains interesting articles on "The French Cinema To-day" by Owen Sheehy Skeffington, "Isotype in Films" by Marie L. Neurath and new Irish films by Sean Dynan, among many others. There is also a supplement on Children's Films. "Scannan" is published at 30, Borris Road, Portlaoighise, Eire, at 9d. a copy (2s. six issues post paid).

**Scottish Educational Film Bulletin** special jubilee number, "Fifty Years of Scottish Cinema". All those interested in

the history of the cinema in Scotland should obtain this revue, which, starting with an article on "the Cinema comes to Scotland, 1896-1902" by T. A. Blake, traces the years down to the present day. It is fully illustrated with stills past and present. (Obtainable from the Scottish Film Council of the British Film Institute, 2, Newton Place, Glasgow, C.3, 2s. 9d. post free).

**The Mini-Cinema**. This new trade paper for the professional 16 mm. user shows promise of being of real value. The first issue contains important articles by Frank Hill of the Kinematograph Renters Society, W. R. Fuller, General Secretary of the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association and Oliver Bell, Director of the British Film Institute. An extremely valuable section is thirty pages of "potted" reviews of new 16 mm. films, while film society secretaries should be interested in extracts from current legislation regarding Entertainment Tax. (Mini-Cinema is published quarterly, price 2s. 6d., by the Cinema Press Ltd., 93/95, Wardour St., W.1.)

**Theatre** (Bradford Civic Playhouse, 2s. 6d.). The winter issue contains stills from the International Film Festival at Cannes and an interesting article on Music and Musicians in Films by Gerald Cockshott.

**16mm. Film User**. (1s. per copy, annual subscription 10s. post free (including abroad)).

This is a new monthly periodical, published by Current Affairs Ltd. It is concerned with 16 mm. films from all points of view.

## THE FILM SOCIETIES

*Once again Secretaries are reminded that notes of activities cannot be inserted unless received before the 25th of December, March, June and September*

**The New Film Society, Colwyn Bay.**

The Society has lost many of its old members through the return to London of many of the Ministry of Food evacuated staffs, but a publicity campaign has brought in 200 new members whom we welcome heartily. It is hoped to raise the membership over the 500 mark during the Spring season.

A questionnaire was issued to members in November and other societies may care to note the replies.

1. Do you prefer Comedy or Drama?—  
51% said Drama,  
8% Comedy,  
41% No Preference.
2. What nation's films do you prefer?—  
31% said French,  
24% German,  
19% Russian,  
17% Swiss,  
9% Austrian.

3. Would you like a long Documentary?  
56% said Yes,  
31% said No,  
13% No Answer.

4. Would you like a silent classic?—  
64% said Yes,  
27% said No,  
9% No Answer.

5. What type of short films do you prefer?—  
20% said Cartoons,  
18% Documentary,  
16% Nature,  
15% Travel,  
14% Music,  
10% Comedy,  
7% Early.

6. Are you interested in lectures or discussions on films?—  
45% said No,  
41% said Yes,  
14% No Answer.



7. Are you interested in 16 mm. shows ?-  
 42% said Yes,  
 39% said No,  
 19% No Answer.

The Secretary would be glad to receive any information about any similar questionnaires in other societies, and also about the running of 16mm. shows.

#### Edinburgh University Film Society

This Society was formed in October this year and has been very well supported by the students and staff. Membership is limited to 150 owing to the size of the Hall, and this maximum was reached within three weeks of the beginning of term—no mean achievement for a University Society. 16 mm. films are used, of course, but it is hoped eventually to use 35 mm. when the Society is more secure financially. Films to be shown this session include *The Blue Angel*, *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*, *M*, *The Edge of the World*, *The Battleship Potemkin*, *Of Mice and Men*, and many other well-known documentaries and 'classics'. The honorary Secretary, Mr. William M. Ewen, S.R.C. Office, Old College, The University, Edinburgh, 8, would be very interested to hear of Film Societies in other Universities and to exchange programmes with them.

#### Norwich Film Society

We were unable to show *Chinesische Nachtigal* in our programme of November 17th.

The programmes of the Eighth Session are as follows: Jan. 19th: *Marie Louise*, *Bharata Natyam*, *Kill or be Killed*; Feb. 16th: *Madchen in Uniform*, *Out of Chaos*, *Little Red Riding Hood*; March 16th: *My Universities*, *Ordeal by Ice*.

In addition the following 16 mm. programmes will be given: Jan. 23rd: *Berlin*, *The Seashell and the Clergyman*; Feb. 6th: *Mother*; March 6th: *Warning Shadows*.

#### Manchester and Salford Film Society

The 17th Season opened on Sunday, September 29th, with Paul Rotha's *Land of Promise* and was followed by a discussion, led by S. V. May, Regional Organiser of the Building Trade Operatives.

Other features booked include: *Children of the Soviet Arctic*, *Quai des Brumes*, *Ernte*, *Strange Incident* and *Les Otages*.

Film Forum discussions include an address by Leonard Behrens on "The role of the film in international relations" and by two of our Executive members, R. M. Kay, who will open a discussion on "The Amateur Producer in Film Making" illustrated with his own productions, and later R. G. Crawley will discuss "The Season's Films" screened by the Society.

Mr. R. Cordwell, the Society's Founder, has resigned as Secretary and taken over the position of Advisor and Organiser, arising out of his recent removal to Blackpool (185, Ansdell Road). Secretaries please note: the new Secretary is Mr. J. R. Peters of 24, Westray Road, Manchester, 13, and the newly elected Chairman, Councillor M. P. Pariser. Mr. Cordwell is assisting the newly formed Blackpool Film

Society and would be pleased to receive programmes of other Societies in addition to Mr. Peters.

#### The Tyneside Film Society

After the merger of the People's Theatre Film Club and the Pre-war Tyneside Film Society, the Society, which now has a membership of nearly 1,000, completed its Winter Season 1946, with *Ivan the Terrible*. The other films shown were *Nous les Gosses*, *The Childhood of Maxim Gorki*, *L'Homme qui cherche la verite* and *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*. Amongst the various Shorts shown were *Cyprus is an Island* and *Diary for Timothy*.

In addition the T.F.S. run in conjunction with the W.E.A. a series of Lecture Discussions at King's College. The speakers were Dr. H. H. Wollenberg and Dr. Roger Manvell. Their subjects were "The history and development of the Film in America and France" respectively.

A new venture was the issue of a Programme-Magazine at each Film Show including reviews of the Films to be screened as well as articles on various aspects of film art and news and views from the film world.

Owing to the great demand three performances instead of two per show will be given at the Tatler Cinema during the Spring Season commencing on January 12th with *Grapes of Wrath* to be followed by *Marie-Louise*, *Crime et Chatiment*, *Zero de Conduit*, *Land of Promise* and *Les Visiteurs du Soir*. The Spring Lecture Discussions will be given by Dr. Clifford Leech of Durham University on "Foundations of Cinema" illustrated with examples of films.

The Film Art Exhibition of the Arts Council of Great Britain was arranged at the Chronicle Hall together with C.O.I. Film shows from November 26th to December 15th.

#### Irish Film Society

The Irish Film Society this season is organising two series of shows in Dublin, eight standard at the Theatre de Luxe on Saturdays and six substandard at the Archbishop Byrne Hall on Wednesdays. So far the following features have been presented: *Derriere La Facade*, *Marie, Children of the Soviet Arctic*, *Adventure in Bokhara* (standard) and *The Italian Straw Hat* and *Warning Shadows* (substandard). Shorts have included *Kathak*, *Star in the Sand*, *Once Over Lightly*, *Lotte Reiniger's Carmen*, *Chants Populaires No. 1*, *Kill or be Killed*, *Your Children's Eyes*.

The following features will be screened at the Theatre de Luxe in the New Year: Rotha's *Land of Promise*, *Days of Hope*, *Westfront 1918*, *Ivan the Terrible*, and a new French or Swedish film, probably *La Belle et la Bete* or *Hets*. Accompanying shorts will include *Our Country*, *We Live in Two Worlds*, *The Voice that Thrilled the World*.

Coming 16mm. shows will include *L'Idée*, *Song of Ceylon*, *Ermites du Ciel*, *The Plow that Broke the Plains*, *Turksib*, *Intolerance*.

Plans to re-organise a substandard production unit are at present being considered. Enquiries about the Society's plans may be addressed to the Offices at 5, North Earl Street, Dublin.

The Society has branches operating in Portlaoighise, Drogheda and Limerick, which, with the exception of one or two features, screen the programmes shown in Dublin.

#### The Oldham Repertory Cinema Club.

The Oldham Repertory Cinema Club was formed in unusual circumstances. A group of Oldham soldiers, serving in Jerusalem at the time of the King David Hotel disaster, decided that the cultural facilities available at an Army Headquarters were superior to those existing in their home town. It was agreed that the first man home should form a Repertory Cinema Club. The first man home was, in fact, Sgt. Clifford Brown, now a teacher under the Emergency Scheme, and four months of hard work have resulted in a membership limited by existing accommodation to 136, with a waiting list of hundreds. The standard 16 mm. classics in the National Film Library are being shown at the rate of one a week, with the programme made up to length by the pick of the documentaries. A switch to 35 mm. is planned next year. The annual all-inclusive subscription is £2 10s. The Club is affiliated to the Federation of English and Welsh Film Societies. The local Director of Education is the President, the Youth Organiser is the Treasurer and the Mayor the Patron. A scheme for films in schools and youth clubs is under way. Will Club secretaries please write to Mr. Clifford Brown, 36, Shawhall Bank Road, for inclusion in mailing list for Bulletin, programme notes, conference reports and monographs on the film. Literature of other societies will be welcomed.

*The Editor*, SIGHT AND SOUND.

Dear Sir,

I was somewhat disturbed on reading the article in your last number on psychology and the cinema. It appeared to me that in some places the writer was twisting his material to suit his own ends. In particular may I refer to his use of the famous allegory of the cave in the Republic of Plato. He so far stretches this allegory as to read into it a prophecy by Plato of the modern cinema and a description of a typical cinema audience.

This is a complete misrepresentation of this famous passage. All serious students of Plato know that in this passage he is concerned to point out the difference between the ordinary world of our senses and the knowledge which we acquire by means of sense experience and the world of true knowledge to which few people ever attain, which can only be reached by means of pure thought untainted by any sense experience. Moreover it is extremely doubtful whether Plato with his special emphasis on the dangers of sensuous presentations would have wholly approved of the modern entertainment of cinema. This is obviously a question which can never be determined. It should be our concern, however, to see that enthusiasts for the cinema do not strain interpretations in a reckless manner to bolster up their own point of view.

Yours faithfully,

G. H. Keir.



# FILMSTRIPS

*in*

*Full Colour*



**FOR  
RELIGIOUS  
INSTRUCTION**

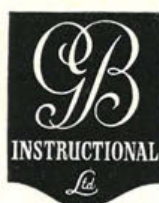


Send 6d. for Illustrated  
Brochure in full colour

**VISUAL EDUCATION Ltd., 9, Upper Berkeley St., Portman Square, London, W.1**

Telephone: AMBassador 2351





## FORTHCOMING CLASSROOM FILMS

### *First List of Titles*

The new programme of G.B. Instructional is based on systematic inquiry among teachers themselves as to the films they need. Of many of the films there will be two versions, Senior and Junior; the subject matter will determine whether both are required.

As a general rule the senior films will be Sound, junior Silent; again the nature of the material will be the deciding factor.

Most of the films will be accompanied by Film Strips, which can, of course, be used independently of the films. The latest camera techniques will be employed, including the brilliant use of animated drawings, diagrams, etc. Every film will be made under teacher supervision.

The following series are in preparation, and some of the films are well on the way to completion.

Six Physical Geography films (colour); Elementary Citizenship (12 films on the Local Services); Elementary Physiology (9 colour films); World Geography (12 films); A River from Source to Sea (8 silent colour films for juniors); The Mediæval Monastery; Health (5 films); Elementary Physics (9 films); Botany (7 films); Films to Start You Talking (for discussion groups). A group on Life in Other Lands is in hand, but will obviously take some time to complete.

Meanwhile, write for the new revised catalogue of G.B.I. educational films to Donald A. Mackenzie, M.C., M.A., Principal of

The Education Division  
**G.B. INSTRUCTIONAL LTD.**  
21, Soho Square, London, W.1